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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

JAMES MACKINTOSH,

93rd Sutherland Highlanders.

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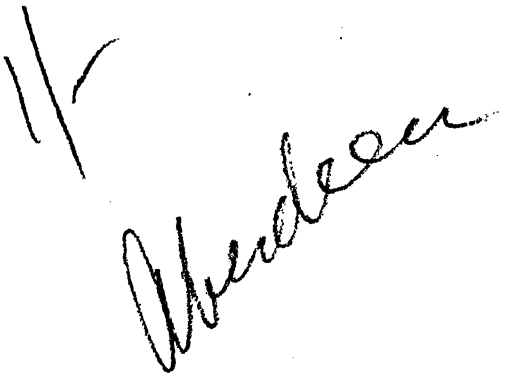

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

BY

JAMES MACKINTOSH,

BAND,

93rd Sutherland Highlanders.

ABERDEEN:

PRINTED AT THE FREE PRESS OFFICE,

FOR THE AUTHOR.

1871.

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TO HER GRACE

The Duchess of Sutherland,

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BY

HER HUMBLE SERVANT,

The Author.

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PREFACE.

It is not in the hope of attaining high literary success or fame that the author of the following trifling effusions hazards the undeniably doubtful results attending their publication. Notwithstanding the unanimous voice of encouraging and applauding friendship, and the promptings of his own breast, he feels that he stands, as it were, on a pinnacle of projecting rock, immediately over a darkly yawning abyss, into which he is, perhaps, to be precipitated, followed by the withering shafts which justice has in her power to hurl from the bow of formal criticism. The picture awes—the thought awakens a multiplicity of horrors! But of all his readers, learned and unlearned, particularly the former, he begs, in the words of that mighty bard, immortal Burns, that they will make every allowance for education and circumstances of life.

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Though he has traced the hazy footprints of his own peculiar imagination, and followed with almost idolized pleasure the various flights of his fancy, whose creations, however tame and lacking in vigour, were a source of amusement and pleasure to himself in many an hour that would have otherwise passed wearily away, it must not be imagined that all this was done with a view to future celebrity as a poet; such was not his dream *then*, though certainly his dearest wish *now* would be to meet some little meed of approval.

Many, indeed the greater portion, of the pieces were written during a protracted monotony of weary, sultry, and tediously passing hours in Indian barrack-rooms, and amidst the unavoidable difficulties attendant on camp life in that bright land of the sun. Thus, many of them may lack the freshness breathing through similar productions by some of the song-bards of the land

> **Where Burns awoke his mighty lyre**
> **To songs aglow with living fire.**

Should the question be asked, Why he never wrote anything characteristic of India? he answers, that, during his stay in the *golden* land of

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Shah Jehan, he had literally failed to discover any of those blissful abodes and ambrosial bowers which arose, on every side replete with flowers, fragrance, and soul-soothing odours, to welcome and receive the immortal Lalla Rookh. Thus, then, it need not be wondered that his Muse, forsooth, has never been fascinated, or inspired by the fabled beauty of its scenery, or the exaggerated grace and loveliness of its daughters. When he sang in the far East, it was on the immediate presentation of some object of endearment, striking image, or pleasing souvenir, connected in some manner with his boyhood and the

"Land of mountain and of flood."

To subscribers and friends, whose disinterested efforts for his success and well-being he can never enough esteem, he owes a lasting heartfelt gratitude. And, in conclusion, being only a soldier, practically inexperienced in the art of verse-making, he humbly ventures to express a hope that the gallant followers of Mars may never have occasion to bow their heads—ashamed of

THE AUTHOR.

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE TAILOR AN' GHAIST.

A TALE.

Gin ilka story tauld be true,
This ane maun doubtless be sae too ;
It canna be a lie, nae doubt,
For lies are spread the mair about.
But fac' an' fiction are sic things
As flee wi' ane anither's wings ;
An' when ye watch their blendin' fires,
Fu' aft ilk thought morose expires.
Some think the year was saxteen hunner
When this heroic game o' wonner
Was played ; I canna truly tell,
Sae cast yer net in Truth's deep well ;
But sin' it is sae lang a time,
I mean to tell't a wee in rhyme.

When Scotland was fu' sair opprest,
An' feudal hordes aroused unrest ;

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When pillage an' intrusion were
Twa hounds, that drove unto despair
Sic folk as sought a peacefu' shade,
To heal ilk wound the claymore made.
Ah! syne did Chaos, like a sprite,
That haunts the murder-scenes o' night,
Stride giant-like owre vales an' hills,
An' triumph'd owre the oozin' rills
O' human life! Not female charms
Arrested war's unsparin' arms!
What wild traditions folk wad tell
O' lovers 'neath some cantrip spell,
Or magic wonders of the sprites,
Foregathering wi' Nick by nights:
Haith, folk in high and low condition,
Had some belief in superstition.

Let's say, when Yule cam' laughin' north
Wi' his attendants—Fun and Mirth—
Then clansmen ceased ilk desp'rate splore,
An' hung the target an' claymore
Upo' their wa's, to celebrate
Auld Yule; thus let us arbitrate.

The moon's bright beams lay silently
On ilka brae an' snawy lea;
The hoar frost, unco chill an' grey,
On ilka door an' winnock lay;
The lift might lure a traveller's e'e,
For stars were blinkin' bonnilie;

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And silence held unruffled power,
For sune 'twad be the midnight hour,
Save that were heard wild, martial notes,
Peculiar to the mountain Scots.

Balblair wi' mirthfu' echoes rung,
An' bagpipes sounded, lasses sung,
An' clallans, blest wi' vocal powers,
Awoke auld Scotia's music-flowers,
Till reckless neebors roun' the place,
Threw smiles on slumber's dreamy face;
What erst was dull, to life awoke,
An' carlins sang like morning gowk;
Auld carls wad tap the mill an' sing,
Or dance, ma sooth, a merry spring.
Assumin' day's attire, they rose,
Wha vainly strove their een to close,
An' join'd unanimous in mirth,
Despisin' Hornie's power on earth.
The Tailor, too, amang them a',
Was neither laith, nor last ava,
To gie a jest, or sing a sang,
Or set aright things aften wrang;
Haith, unco fond he was o' drink,
Sae maist o' tailors are, I think.
Noo he, to add to mirth a zest,
Thus drink's great deity addrest:—

"O Bacchus! god o' rosy wine,
Deservin' a' the praise

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We mortals heap upo' thy shrine
Thro' a' oor little days.
Historians' pages, Poets' strains,
Display nae scarcity o' brains,
When thou hast lent thy fire ;
The very saul o' beauty glows
In ilka line o' verse or prose,
When thou sic lines inspire !
Inspire us, an' fire us
Wi' witty thoughts an' bright ;
That mirth may gie birth gay
To pleasures lang as night.

" Thoughts are the lightnings o' the mind,
They flash when wine inspires,
Within that region unconfined,
Like meteoric fires !
Syne beauty opes her magic gate,
Whence myriad treasures emanate,
A stream o' spangles rare ;
An' eloquence leaps to the tongue,
An' new-born, laughin', pleasures young
To glad the heart prepare.
Syne happy owre nappy,
That reams in bicker strang,
We'se be till oor glee will
Enchant the nicht alang.

" Let music's sweet harmonious flow
Arouse lethargic hearts ;

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An' tak' the sting frae wily Woe,
An' blunt Care's subtle darts;
For wha wad grovel i' the dust,
An' hopeless, heartless, brook ilk thrust,
Care wi' his darts may gie?
Let wine an' music, lasses too,
Wi' lips like daisies weet wi' dew,
Our sole companions be.
Syne laughin', an daffin',
Shall haste the minutes on
Their way hame—as gay hame
As nymphs o' Bacchus' throne.

"To thee, oor praises dove-like wing
Their flight, bright god o' wine!
As numerous as buds o' spring,
Or grapes upo' the vine.
Sing hey for wine! an' revels gay,
An' social mirth, till daw o' day,
Shall peep up i' the east;
An' may the moments as they flee,
Like us get fou, an' i' their glee
Right stacher frae our feast!
Oh! blissfu' when thus fou
We bicker while we sing;
We'se drink till we wink will,
An' bide what morn may bring!"

The sang was o'er, an' loud applause
Swell'd like the voice o' waterfa's.

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Hurtin' the middle hour o' night,
Wauk'nin the silence in its flight,
Pervadin' wood an' lanely glen,
The joyfu' shouts o' merry men;
An' roun' gaed spirit-rousin' bickers,
The alpha, haith, o' a' kent liquors,
Till, faith, the Tailor got right fou,
An' aff the robes o' peace he threw—
Bade Modesty to flee wi' Peace,
An' join the gods in bonnie Greece;
An' stoutly shakin' han's wi' Strife,
Hauds high aboon a gleamin' knife,
Vowin' a vengeance doubly dire
On a' his foemen, son and sire.

A birkie, no sae fou as he,
Sat 'mid that revel company,
Wha sagely thought, an' sagely said—
"To-morrow, let our vows be paid
To battle's bluid-insatiate god;
Nor strew wi' thorns the flowery road
On which the nymph-like pleasures 'gin
To brighten moments as they rin.
Let ae short night be consecrated
To mirth; or, are we truly fated
To listen to the howls o' strife?
Alas for man, an' human life!"

"Frien', by my saul, ye mak' me sad—
There—there's my han', my honest lad;

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'Tis true—when we mad revels keep,
Strife breathes into the ear o' sleep,
An' bars ilk dream—nae matter then,
The present mak's us happy men."

" 'Tis wisely spoken," Allan said,
An' solemnly he shook his head,
" I kenn'd brave men, an' ye hae too,
Wha doubtless suffered as they grew,
But secret thoughts wad fearless swell
Subjection's arrows fail'd to quell ;
They wadna shrink at midnight hour
Frae earthly or unearthly power ;
They wadna flee in time o' need,
But stand till bosoms ceased to bleed !
They'd drain a bicker wi' the best
That ever lived, an' hae their jest."

To whilk the Tailor thus replied,
As forth he stood in manly pride :—
" Pooh ! I'm o' thae—I'm brave—wha's braver,
Though I hae fought wi' foeman never ?
But when I draw, I'se gar them shudder,
An' reel, like ship without her rudder !
Oh, for a combat that ye'd see
Me clasp lang immortality—
Not immortality o' frame,
But, what's mair glorious, o' a name !"

" I ken ye're brave, my honest frien',
I see't in yer flame-flashin' een ;

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Yer vigorous frame an' chivalrous air
Mak' ye notorious everywhere;
But, tho' a warrior's mighty core
Beats i' yer breast, an' days o' yore
Shed mystic sparks into yer soul,
That raise ye 'boon man's mere control!
Tho' wild traditions goad ye on
To mazes dark, to truth unknown;
Tho' noble deeds o' warriors brave
May lure ye to the warrior's grave
To pour yer sorrows owre his tomb
In deep unutterable gloom!
Tho' the lustre o' Minerva's shrine
Might bid ye folly's flaws resign;
Tho' the brightness o' a lassie's e'e
Might gar ye her seducer be,
An' violate the *righteous law*,
Whilst blessings on a grove or shaw
Fell frae yer lips, like snawflakes bright,
An' like them meltin' o' delight;
Tho' ye wad fear nor ghaist nor deil—
I'se wager ye, my vauntie chiel,
That ye hae not the manly heart
This spectre-rovin' hour to start
For Beauly's eerie auld kirkyird,
An' there, amang the lang interr'd,
To steek an' sew a pair o' hose."
"What!" said the Tailor, as he rose
An' seized his crutches (ye maun ken
The Tailor had, untouch'd by pain,

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Ae powerless leg—twa crutches good
As e'er ware cuttet oot o' wood,
Wi' whilk he'd loup a ditch, I'm tauld,
As swank as ony twal-year-auld)—
"Name yer wager—sooth, I'se win it,
Unless auld Cloutie's sel' be in it."

"Troth, I'se do that," said Allan, quickly,
While lasses faintet an' grew sickly,
To think the puir auld cripple Tailor
Should mix wi' ghaists, an' syne grew paler;—
"I'se wager ye a hunner plack;
Noo, by ilk hoarse-voiced catarac'
That ever headlang tumbled doun
A precipiece wi' eldritch croon,
Gin yer no back 's the clock strikes *ane*
The deil will hae his servan' ta'en!"

"Thir stakes are worth the winnin' truly,
An' by the winsome maids o' Beauly,
Gin they're nae mine ere morn appears,
Ye're welcome, frien', to baith my ears;
Think ye, I fear auld Hornie's evils?
Tuts, man, I'd face a score o' devils!
Within yon kirk's dark dreary womb
I'se win a wager or a tomb."

"Done!" said the ever pawky Allan,
Delighted meikle wi' his talen';
"An' may the deevil speed ye, Tailor,
But never prove yer gloomy gaoler."

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Syne out the Tailor, frae their sight,
Soon slippet into deep midnight;
Whiles wand'rin' like a restless spirit,
That wand'rin' wonders ever where it
May rest in peace—still quicker fled
To mix wi' secrets o' the dead!
Now frae the wood he glidin' cross'd,
Now on the road as light's a ghost;
He was determined—fully bent
On victory as on he went.
His bonnet braid, his twa guid crutches,
His coat o' years and countless patches,
His bristled hair, like stibble fiel',
An' bearded face, might fley the deil.
Nae care had he for mounds or heaps,
For spangs, guid faith, he turn'd to leaps,
An' ilka leap uncommon lang,
For minutes vanish'd by fu' thrang.
Now wi' a dauntless, desperate look,
Ilk rising fear to nought he shook;
For mystic deeds o' cunning witches
He cared nae mair than rotten stitches;
Tho' ilka thing that dire hell's own is—
Corbies, Kelpies, Bogles, an' Brownies—
Seem'd menacin' on ilka side,
The Tailor's darin' still defied.
Tho' there were howlin', waefu' screamin',
An' magic lights aroun' him gleamin',
Demon-faces, in horrid crowds,
Peerin' thro' artifical clouds,

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Still bauldly on the Tailor sped
To haud communion wi' the dead!
Noo Beauly, like a spectre knight,
Rose in its glitterin' armour bright;
An' Luna's locks lay on its crest
Like rose-leaves on an infant's breast.
How white its robes! and how sublime!
A shrine o' beauty spared by Time!
Ah! Time's impressive, ling'rin' pace
In earthly grandeur soon we trace!
An' alabaster dome of gods
To Time's unnumer'd visits nods,
Until at last his wings mak' dark
Fanes which traditions vaguely mark!

That beauteous garden o' the vale
Was greeted wi' a happy—"Hail!"
An' now the Tailor paused to view
(Fond recollections woke anew)
A grandly-glorious village scene
Portray'd by night's high-dwellin' queen!
An'—hark! what strangely-joyous notes
Burst frae the portals o' the cots,
An' swell triumphant to the skies;
Afar on Echo's wings they rise.
E'en slumb'rin' woods new tongues hae found
That imitate ilk mirthfu' sound.
It is the bagpipe's merriest swell,
An' charms alike ilk beau an' belle;
Folk shout the shout o' revelry
In heedless conviviality.

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As on the Tailor hied, an' on,
Regardless o' Mirth's flauntin' tone,
A waefu' prospect met his e'e—
Dormant insensibility!
'Neath his astounded, pityin' eyes,
Inebriation's victim lies,
Unpillowed, bedded on the street,
Nor could he move nor han's nor feet!
The Tailor weeps, tho' partly fou,
And sorrow's tears his cheeks imbue;
O, how he feels for that puir mortal,
Wha's nearer death's than life's gay portal!
The language o' a saddened core
Escapes, 'tis pity's untaught lore:—

"Oh! man, whare's thy humanity?
Thou Life, what may thy pleasures be,
Sin' thus my fellow-mortal lies
Wi' tears half-frozen in his eyes?
Cauld are the sheets his limbs enfauld,
I wonner he's no dead o' cauld!
But, mark me! chief,* in Folly's ha',
Thy name like wither'd leaf shall fa'
Frae Folly's bright bedecket throne,
In silence shall it lie unknown;
Wae's thorns shall broken be, an' Bliss
Shall echo Love's an' Friendship's kiss."

As faither tak's his infant dear,
An' fondles it wi' love sincere,

* Drink.

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The Tailor, wi' paternal care,
Succours that image o' despair,
An' by a neebor's ingle-lowe
Enshrines him. What's afore him now?
A solemn, solitary place,
Whare Nature wears a serious face!
Whare hunners 'neath oblivion's shroud,
That erst the knee to mirth had bow'd,
Blendin', perchance, the laugh an' sigh,
Do there unknown, forgotten lie!

But on!—Behold yon Gothic dome,
A spirit mournin' owre its tomb
It seemeth, for its glorious days
Hae vanished wi' its kindred blaze!
Whare are its pious fathers now,
Wi' haly leuk an' lyart pow?—
Its gowden shrines—ilk sacred place
Whare sweet Madona's heavenly face
Beamed on the infant at her breast
In pictured bliss? Dark as the rest!

Ah, what a change!—here banes are scatter'd,
An' dead men's dresses torn an' tatter'd,
Broken coffins, spauls here an' there,
An' sights wad spell a mortal's stare!
What Beauty's finger nobly graced,
Time, passing slowly, mocked, effaced!

An ancient tomb, whare valour lies
In bonds o' death, now meets his eyes;

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Thereon a statue rests supine
O' ane, they say, that ance did shine
Triumphant on the field o' death,
Whare he at last resigned his breath.
Weel, owre the Tailor gaed, an' sat
On death's still picture—haith he swat!
Forsooth, nae wonner—ye wad too,
To rin sae far an' be sae fou.
The hose afore him syne ware spread,
Out cam' the needle, thimble, thread,
An' while the moonbeams roun' him fell
He thus 'gan gashin' wi' himsel' :—

Tailor—A dreary-lookin' place, guid faith,
This tabernacle o' King Death!
An' still within thae gloomy walls
I baud my Yule wi' lifeless spauls,
An' skulls without a tongue or eye
That roun' their tombs neglected lie!
Langsyne thir skulls could think an' joke,
Ev'n like my neebors, honest folk;
Praise, pray, an' censure like mysel',
Laugh, weep, an' speak o' heaven an' hell;
Feel, hear, an' see—sing, dance, an' reel,
An' bless the priest, an curse the deil;
But what a contrast noo appears,
They're minus noses, een, an' ears!
True—here we trace Death's finger-mark,
But this is a'—the rest is dark!

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Hark! sighs an' sobs! Do here complain
Poor spirits o' departed men?
They sigh, they grane in yonder shade—
Rest waefu' spirits o' the dead!
I'se wauk my vocal powers at once
To soothe their granes, or drive them hence.
I used to sing a stupid ditty,
But canna now, ah, mair's the pity,
That seldom fail'd to gar folk curse,
An' vow they never heard a worse;
They'd poke their fingers i' their ears,
An' my reward was kicks or sneers;
That's past, I'se try ance mair my skill,
A sang's a sang, though howl'd at will:—

"Fair fingers are sweeping the harp's mellow strings,
An' sweet are the notes that the nymphs o' the blast
Are bearin' alang on their aerial wings
To lay, like bright beams, on the shrine o' the past.
An' beautiful damsels are blushin' to-night
Amid sunny revels, untarnish'd by gloom;
But what though they now be sae spotless an' bright,
Their vera existence is linked wi' the tomb.

"The cheeks that were pallid are redden'd wi' wine,
An' rosy lips utter love's magical tale,
An' stripplings, enamoured o' beauty divine,
Insensibly kneel to the nymphs that prevail;
An' let us hae pleasure—let's suck honied flowers—
Gay revellers sing still—forgotten their doom—

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But mark what is tauld by the fleet, flying hours—
Man, watch, thy existence is linked wi' the tomb !

"The heart that was crushed at the touch o' despair
Expands like a blossom that's woo'd by the sun ;
For pleasure an' love are the sole tenants there,
An' care sneaks awa frae the chambers o' fun.
The false blaze o' glory sinks doun on the heart
Till ilk nobler blossom be robbed o' its bloom ;
Still mirthfu' carousals their humours impart,
Though human existence be linked wi' the tomb.

"Awa' wi' philosophies fresh frae the pen
O' sages that steep i' the myst'ries an' mist
O' ages gaen by, things that baffle our ken ;
Let pleasure alane in blythe circles exist.
For grim moralizin' I never was meant,
Sin' nature first fashion'd my form i' the womb ;
The warl's a sage, an' was langsyne acquaint
Wi' this—Our existence is linked wi' the tomb !"

A merrier sang, an' lighter mood,
Wad better suit my solitude ;
But what a moment may suggest
Unconscious leaves the heedless breast ;
An' sae a body wad reca'
Thoughts that like moments flew awa' ;
Irrevocably thus my sang,
Whase notes on Eurus' pinions hang,
Hath flown awa'—its echos sleep
Beyond the murmurs o' the deep,

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Whaur slumber is afraid to sigh,
Whaur moonbeams wreathe the mountains high,
Whaur streamlets steal wi' dreamy flow
Through voiceless valleys far below;
Whaur phantom clouds mak' dark the skies,
An' whaur far-flyin' Echo dies.
But let it gang—'twill sleep as weel
'Neath fabled waves, wooed to conceal,
As in the pages o' a book
That 's doom'd to rot in some dark nook.

Ghaist—Mortal, beware! a head appears,
That for long restless, hopeless years,
Hath slumbered on Death's couch of snow,
For my inheritance is woe!
And now amidst the twilight gloom,
That hovers round my narrow room,
It rises.—Fly! and timely save
Thyself from an untimely grave!
Thou break'st the silence reigning here;
Beware! thou'lt forfeit peace so dear!
Thou mock'st the silence of my tomb,
And hence anticipate thy doom.

Tailor—'Sooth! let the unco head appear,
I need some antique jester here;
Ane deems it eerie 'mang the dead,
An' sae wad greet a witty head.
Though ance perchance by death 'twas stung,
Forsooth it yet can wag a tongue;

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Faith! had it wagged when I came here,
Our jests had been amusin', queer;
An' I, too, had been spared the pains
O' taxin' lang my little brains,
By seekin', searchin', a' in vain,
For thoughts to mak' a witty strain;
But ye hae heard how I hae failed;
Pooh! nought the fumes o' wine availed.
I scarce hae time to blaw my nose—
Sae busy at a pair o' hose;
Sae gies yer uncos, honest head,
Or gin you please, a sang instead.

Ghaist—Death's sable pall aside is cast,
A bloodless hand is rising fast
To snatch thee from thy sculptured bench!
Fires blaze which rivers cannot quench.
Yes! fires in which the damned soul,
Weeps as their sheeted lightnings roll!
And helpless spirits flit through flames,
That once could boast of mighty names,
But ne'er a generous action they;
Fool! thou shalt be with them ere day
Extends its golden wings afar,
Or sun-darts leave Apollo's car!
My wrath thou canst not long withstand;
Thy doom is sealed—beware the hand!

Tailor—Pooh! thou an unco babbler art,
Some disappointment galls your heart,

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An' vexes ye sae meikle too,
That ye wad sting anither's noo.
Fie! let impassioned threats expire,
The cankerin' fumes o' groundless ire;
What, though the sting o' angry bee
Has got a moment's pungency,
The pain is gane ere weel a minute,
Ane d——ns the subtle thing that 's done it;
Thus, gif ye gie a stubborn stock
O' menseless gash, gude speed the joke,
I'm just as headstrang as yersel',
Or ony afrit oot o' h—l!
Here 's proof—afore yer vera nose
I steek a pair o' Hielan' hose.

Ghaist—Defying fool! is this a jest?
Look on this bony, fleshless heart;
The vomit of a wormy grave;
'Twould take the ocean wave by wave
To quench the fire that burns within,
A penalty for worldly sin!
I'm curst—thou shalt be doubly so!
Ten minutes bring eternal woe!
Inexorable still? Relent,
Ere they be wholly, ever spent,
And flown, or melted in the sea
That has no shores—Eternity!

Tailor—Weel, ghaist or demon; what thou art
I carena, but I'se soon depart;

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Sae leave me for a wee alane,
Nor cudgel me wi' words sae vain.
Suffice it—when my wark is done
I'se toddle hame to join the fun,
An' leave ye 'mang yer kindred tombs
To snuff the deleterious fumes
That thicken ev'n the atmosphere—
I wad be nae live tenant here—
An' poison, too, the playfu' win'
That may perchance come whirlin' in;
Till then, should powers unknown oppose,
Despite their arts, I'se steek my hose.

Ghaist—Behold this grave—now, Tailor, shrink—
And I with one foot on its brink;
And from the deep, dark, doleful hollow,
Too soon the other foot may follow!
Canst thou withstand my vengeance dire,
Which, keen as lightning-bolts of fire,
Will hurl thee down the cold abyss,
Where foulest worms thy lips will kiss!
Be vigilant—I cannot spare,
But I can warn—Beware, beware!

Tailor—Weel, weel, I hae a warl' o' space
To flee the horrors o' this place;
Sae fare-ye-weel—my task is done,
An' noo to bask in smiles an' fun;
Tak' ye yer ain way, Maister Ghaist,
On earth nae spirit is caress'd;

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Ay, gang yer ain mysterious way,
Which ne'er the living trod, nor may!

Syne frae that grim sequestered place
The Tailor fled, an' fled apace,
Now spangin' owre skulls, graves, an' stanes,
Clouts an' coffins, an' scatter'd banes,
He fand himsel' just at the door,
But thought, alas! the fatal hour
Predicted by the Ghaist was come;
The thought bespoke eternal gloom!—
For—skelp—behind him on the wa'.
A han' did like a hammer fa',
He onward push'd, for weel he kenn'd
'Twas no' the warnin' o' a friend.

Ghaist—I have you, Tailor! You were born
For ghastly clutches. Ere the morn
Has spread her wings, thou, too, shalt be
A spirit damned eternally!
A wager lost—Hell the reward!
Duped mortal! Ha! thy skull is hard!

"I'se try yer ain," the Tailor said;
As—crash—a crutch fell on the head,—
That wound was in the pall o' death;
An', wi' a yell, the Ghaist, guid faith,
Fell prostrate at the victor's feet,
Whilst bluid oozed through the winding-sheet.

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"Ma faith, nor phantom-head has met
My trusty crutch, but just a pate
As fu' o' brains an' fumes o' wine,
Wi' thoughts, gay, volatile, as mine;
The gloomy, ghaistly part it play'd,
Meet retribution has repaid."

He syne mechanically knelt,
While pity's thrillin' touch he felt,
Beside that still, calm form; an' noo
Aside the blood-stained linen drew,—
Good heavens! the face—the fiery eye—
The noble brow, where clotting lie
The life-drops red—the merry lip,
That smiled as't gied the fearless dip
Into the goblet's rosy tide
An hour ago—o' Allan met
His gaze! Stone-still, or petrified
He stood, as if a darker fate
Awaited *him*. He started—glared
In wordless horror! then despaired,
And cursed his hand, existence, man!
And now in dim confusion ran
Dark thoughts within his mind; these were
Soul-crushing shadows o' despair!
He thundered—"Allan"—soft—aloud,
But all in vain. Afar a cloud
Of dark, unhallowed shape came forth
From tempest's dwellin', in the north,

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An' slowly swept along the skies,
Dimming the countless sparkling eyes
That stem the firmament. At last
Night's beauteous queen became o'ercast;
And thus his fate, whate'er it be,
Or was, is still—a mystery.

WHISPERS FROM SOLITUDE.

Lone musing in a solitary place,
Where birds sang melodies to early morning,
'Twas in the summer time, and Nature's face
Was fair, sadly I thought on unreturning
Joys my boyhood knew; at a little space,
Where sunbeams seemed within a streamlet burning,
Reclining on a mossy bank, I saw
A man who inspired reverence and awe.

His locks were white (the picture 's rather old),
And on the pinions of the playful wind
Were loosely, lightly pillowed; and a cold,
But pleasant, smile bespoke a wondrous mind,
Or memory, whose loaded pages told
Events and incidents. I felt inclined
To leave him as I found him—monarch there,
For meditation 's sweet in spot so fair.

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But, as I would retrace my steps, his eye
  Was keenly fix'd upon me, and he beckon'd
Me unto him—doubt and distrust defy
  Discernment—I hesitated a second
Or so, as if an unreality
  Demanded audience of me; thus self-reckon'd
Calculations may turn out full-blown blunders,
'Twere nothing wonderful 'mong greater wonders.

However, when I stood before that sage,
  His prompt assurance dissipated all
The vain forebodings distance failed to assuage,
  For from his lips most solemnly did fall
The story of his life from youth to age;
  What wonders lie beneath sweet Langsyne's pall!
And then, as I was young, collectedly
And calmly, he began thus teaching me:—

Age is full of knowledge, and many years
  Have left their impress on my aged brow;
Yet I'm a stranger in this vale of tears,
  But know enough, and dare not disavow
Life's marked vicissitudes; my night appears—
  Is looming in the distance coldly now;
Ere falls its shadow on my being here,
My spirit's voice I'd pour into your ear.

Contentment is the soul of happiness,
  Experience, a mirror to futurity,
And Industry, the mother of Success;
  Possession is the surest, best security,

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Benevolence alleviates distress,
And Ignorance, the midnight of obscurity;
This I had learned in getting old on earth,
And haunting Wisdom's shade instead of mirth.

When we are happy, are we not contented?
We have a smile alike for friend and foe,
Though superficially that smile be painted,
'Tis deep enough, albeit then, to show
The wearer is not totally unacquainted
With happiness, such as 'tis found, below;
The face, you know 's the index of the mind,
Which, rightly read, unfolds whate'er 's enshrined.

To know futurity, recall the past,
Weigh your experience of things that were,
With those that *may* be; but, before you cast
Your net (which means—before you grasp at air)
Into the future's ocean, void and vast,
Let probability tinge what you'd infer,
Lest noisy critics should lack their humanity,
And charge you promptly, justly, with insanity.

Nor assiduity does pass away
Un-noted, unapplauded, unrewarded;
The labours of a life as of a day,
If well conducted, are not disregarded
By the great Master, who, the sages say,
Profusely prospers worth; but one, discarded
From blessings showerd on honest labour, feels
The sting of misery his breast conceals.

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Distrust the purity of florid promises,
And fine harangues are often grainless chaff.
The miser, too, is apt to pay in grimaces
The debt that gratitude demands. His laugh
In secret triumphs when his envied home he sees
Securely filled with golden gods. Sure half-
Witted common sense may make this confession—
Security 's not safe without possession.

A small donation, too, humanely given,
May mitigate the bitterness of sickness;
The heart that 's liberal most resembles Heaven,
And sympathy well meant, the source is meekness;
But, being generous, be not rashly driven
By shallow praises, man is prone to weakness;
To deem yourself immortalised by fame,
'Tis dangerous to give to gain a name.

A mind unmixed, unsullied, unalloyed
By false ingredients, such as blacken it,
Is like a garden where may be enjoyed
The scent of dewy blossoms; richly lit
It stands a fiery pillar midst the void,
The wilderness of earth, and does emit
Its luscious glories through the ambient air
To win the darkened soul from its despair.

And wisdom is the grandest, greatest blessing,
Which a Divine authority implants
Within the human mind. Life is distressing
To one whose spirit ever pines and pants

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Amid the gloom of ignorance. Expressing
Gratefulness to Him who doth supply our wants,
The mind intelligent soars bright above,
And darkness fadeth from the torch of love.

It is not good to weigh another's folly,
Before you've thrown your own into the scales;
Pause before you judge—judgment may be wholly
Unseasonable, which full oft entails,
With marked fatality, a melancholy
Curse upon you and your offspring. Avails
It naught to pause before you charge with treason!
Methinks it does—quick words don't challenge reason.

The longest road may be the safest one,
The shortest may have dangers insurmountable;
The foolish go the way the wise would shun,
And thus much ill on earth is unaccountable.
Endeavour then, as life's dull round you run,
To drain a precious draught at Wisdom's fount. Able
Or willing hearts o'ercome severest crosses;
Mourn in defeat irrevocable losses.

Despise not the experience of age,
Nor mock the mortal bent unto the ground
And feebly leaning on his staff; a page
He seems to be of Nature's book profound,
Whence you may learn that each man's heritage
Is in that kingdom where all sleep so sound
That elemental war awakes them not:
The thunders roll, but there all is forgot.

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The glory or the gloom of life depends
Upon the goal whence you have launch'd on ocean,
The ocean of existence, whither wends
Your bark, swayed by the tempest's grim commotion,
Or balmy gales, before your voyage ends
In Acheron, or in some heavenly Goshen,
The truth will flash upon your mind most vivid,
Like lightning on a river, restless, livid.

Take heart amid adversities, for never
Can these be overcome without resistance;
A manly spirit, like a rapid river,
Vaults each difficulty that galls existence;
A gate that 's barred may not be barred for ever,
Hope's eye beholds the keeper at a distance;
'Twere folly to depend on Fortune's favours,
Let independence wall your meet endeavours.

Seek not to know religion's hue's intensity,
But thoughtful mind its precepts (if you can);
'Twere vain to try to measure the immensity
Of boundless space; it were enough for man
To act, but wisely, when a just propensity
Inspires, and thus evade the crushing ban
The world has on its tongue to use at will,
It's name 's Hypocrisy—or mantled ill.

A Hypocrite pollutes the noble scheme,
The God of Nature wrought to scatter light
Upon the gloom of superstition's dream,
And rescue mankind from eternal night;

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His mind is nothingness—without a gleam
To guide him from the inconsistent blight!
Avoid in youth unblest dissimulation;
Seed sown in night would still the beams of day shun.

Incline your ear to lessons of morality,
These do ennoble and enlarge the mind;
Nor be embarrassed as to immortality,
Conceive what is conceivable—assigned
To human understanding; the reality
Of being, too, should loosen or unbind
The knotty questions Doubt would urge with laughter;
Do good on earth and fear not dark hereafter.

And the sublimity of contemplation
Is better known in some secluded spot,
For calmly there protean Imagination
Spreads out her radiant wings of golden thought;
Perchance by some bright stream, whose light pulsation
Is palpable to sight; perchance a grot,
Fantastically formed by Nature, may
Be chosen then to while sweet hours away.

The Psyche, or the soul of Poesy,
Is the twin-sister of the dreamy soul
Of Solitude, and both have been by me
Beloved from boyhood. Nature's Dædal scroll
Has been my study, still a mystery,
For still with latent import ever roll
Through blue infinity sphere after sphere,
World after world, and blindly I am here!

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Cast not philosophy with cold contempt
Upon the waters of dark Lethe's tide,
But studiously, if you would be exempt
From dire Minerva's curse, make it your guide;
The odour of its flower 's a sweet dream dreamt,
Its fruit is bliss, when 'tis not misapplied,
Its root 's on earth, its blossom, in the skies,
Its voice, the spirit of sweet melodies!

Nor with derision hail the Poet's song,
His soul, surcharged with more than mortal fire,
Makes not terrestrial things companions long,
But seeks companionship in regions higher,
And brighter, where beauty's, grandeur's nymphs throng
Around the echoes of his mystic lyre;
His life seems two-fold; he is fire and love,
A something more than man, and less than Jove!

A dark and dismal sky—a waste, as 'twere,
Of lowering clouds—a starless vault above—
The eye may pause upon, but finds not there
The mirrored beauty it was wont to love,
Then turns again to earth in blank despair
To see, alas! fair valleys interwove
With shadows, tempests, night, terrestrial gloom,
All that makes heaven dark and earth a tomb!

'Tis thus with life; it being but a sky
With boundaries, its dull horizon is

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Birth and the grave; were all its *stars** to fly,
Or vanish mutely into the abyss,
We only know by name—Eternity—
What would it be? I fear it would be this:—
A savage desert, fraught with groans and slavery,
Vice and immorality, darkness, knavery!

But, happily, the light of Truth is spread
From pole to pole, like wings of soothing touch
Laid gently on a breast that long had bled;
And man, awakening from a sleep too much
Like night, or death, his being to be wed
On it, beholds its glory—wonders how that such
Dawned not upon the mornings of the past,
Ere his forefathers went to sleep at last.

Thus think the Indian and the Arab bold,
Who, rescued from the Python, Ignorance,
Dash to the ground their gods of worshipped gold;
And, shaking off the inadvertent trance
That bound with chains of error, they behold
The peace, the happiness with joyful glance
Which must arise from such a source divine,
And praises mingle round one sacred shrine.

Still there are wars and wastes and desolations,
And here and there gaunt Ruin ever flings
Amidst the slumbers of reposing nations
The blighting shadows of her sable wings;

* Philosophers, Theologians, Poets, &c.

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And the maniacal gesticulations
Of that red phantom that for ever clings
To earth and ocean—carnage it is hight—
Are something frightful in these times of light!

But such is life; and man, whose pastimes are
Ushered and issued by Time's revolving wheel,
Pleasures, virtues, vices, love, wine, and war,
Mingles with devastation's thunder-peal,
As with the lone beams of the evening star,
And, when he passes from the scene, I feel
The dream-like life is o'er, the dreamer banished,
And the reality of both is vanished.

Oh! 'tis a solemn thing to think upon,
How transitory, shadowy, yet earnest
Is that existence, on whose wastes are thrown
Our joys, our loves, our hopes, our fears; thou learn'st
Much in life truly; what is all that 's known,
If thou knowest not thyself?*—if thou discern'st
Not the meaning of thy life's brief dream?—
If men are more or less than what they seem?

Your years are few, but you have much to see,
Before they will have reached the age allotted
Man; and haply in other climes may be
Your floweriest summers spent. A book that 's blotted
And soiled charms not the eye, as one that 's free
From such; and thus a life that is bespotted

* Quoth a sage of other years.

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And stained with vile impurities, good riven,
Is an abomination to high Heaven.

The old man ceased. And now far in the west,
The sun descended in his golden car
Behind the mountains, which seemed softly pressed
By the still lingering rays; and a lone star,
An undulating world, that seemed caressed
By fleecy vapours, rose and climbed afar
The golden radiance of the ethereal dome,
Which told the shades of night began to loom.

He bade me leave him, for exhaustion seemed
To have o'ercome his efforts to be gay;
The soul of flame—the eye of fire that beamed
Unwearied, bright with wisdom's teaching ray,
Were hushed and speechless, and their fulness streamed
In tears, such tears as come not all from clay!
Youth wept with age; and does not such foreshow
That man endures yon starry dome below?

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM.

Hope is a flower that sweetens our existence,
But withers at the touch of disappointment.

When Delhi groaned through all its halls,
And Sol withdrew his ray,
Encamped by night before its walls
A dauntless army lay.

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Ind's rebel hosts were heard afar
Rejoicing o'er the gain
Of treachery, the gall of war,
Snatched from each victim slain!

Amidst that dauntless army slept,
Fatigued and weary, one
O'er whom the gentle moonbeams crept,
As if they dared not shun
The soldier's sleep. His spirit sought
The scenes he loved of yore,
And winged its way, a mystic thought,
To Scotia's lovely shore.

He thought he from the wars returned
To his fair native shore;
Hope's genial fire within him burned
And gladdened all his core;
He visited the scenes which oft
Endeared his school-boy days,
And raised his eyes to heaven aloft,
And muttered heartfelt praise.

And then he sought the humble cot
Where Emma first saw light;
Then feigned to sing, for joy 's the thing
That makes existence bright.
He feigned to smile, with hopeful heart,
Whilst recollections dear
Their soothing influence would impart
To baffle every fear.

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He paused to view the rapid tide
In which he used to lave
His limbs in olden times, and sighed,
As if each laughing wave
He envied, and would once again
Become a boy; but now
Long years of hardships, troubles, pain,
Were written on his brow.

And as he wound his way along
Each flower-bespangled grove,
His heart was glad, his hope was strong,
To meet his own true love.
Though years of care and trouble rolled,
And dangers grim and dire,
He saw her image as of old,
All youthful life and fire.

And thus he 'gan to mark each spot
Familiar to his eyes;
Bright scenes he never had forgot,
Though long 'neath other skies:—
This is the wood where I, when young,
With gentle Emma strayed;
Yonder the grove where thrushes sung
While we in raptures played.

Still blooms the bush, still songs I hear
Recalling days gone by,
When grief impelled no burning tear
Into my weeping eye.

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And here the crystal streamlet winds
Its path through bushes green,
The beverage of divers kinds
Of animals, I ween.

Here still the ivy grows, but now
'Tis touched by grim decay;
'Tis thus oft with the human brow,
That falls to grief a prey.
When Time spreads his perennial veil
O'er what hath been before,
We only learn how to bewail
The joys that gleamed of yore.

This cottage now is shunned by Mirth,
But oh! in days of old,
What guileless beings round its hearth
Soul-stirring stories told!
This is the little garden still,
Once full of flowerets rare,
But time had trod with eyeless skill,
And dimmed its genial glare.

Oft here my Emma happily
Entwined a wreath of flowers
When mild Aurora's heavenly eye
Woke music in the bowers!
And here the florid beauties glowed,
Great Nature's richest gems;
With what reluctance Emma bowed
To break their tender stems!

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What bosom throbbed so anxious then?
What pulses beat so high
As mine? Those times of pleasing pain
Have vanished, flown, gone by!
Why do I live to see all this,
When Emma is not here?
I only smile—how cruel 'tis!
Nor in mine eyes a tear!

Not here I see the smiling face
That told of angel mind,
Nor virgin arms do me embrace,
Nor wreath my locks to bind!
Ah! whither hath my Emma gone,
The innocent, the fair?
Are indications left? No—none,
Save those of scenes that were!

Now in my bosom fades the gleam
Of baffled Hope at last,
Which now resolves the giddy dream—
The pleasures of the past.
The old Cathedral still appears
A giant warring time!
Its Gothic form, though full of years,
Bears still a look sublime!

Those silent graves, on which the grass,
By countless summers wooed,
Has grown, sweet Emma as she'd pass
With choicest flowerets strewed;

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But when she to her father's came—
With flowers her tears were shed—
Would sadly call upon a name,
Unanswered by the dead!

Whose grave is this, with sculptured stone,
And grass grown, new laid sod,
Sequestered—quite apart—alone?
My Emma's!—dead!—oh, God!
The soldier started in his sleep,
And gazed in wild dismay,
For bugles bellowed loud and deep,
The warning for the fray.

But like a shadow of the mind,
That still more real grows
The longer looked on, undesigned,
His dream more real glows.
A thousand fancies swept along,
With aught but pleasing gleam;
But time now breathed a truthful song—
He only dreamed a dream!

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STRAINS OF THE NIGHT.

> And the night shall be filled with music,
> And the cares, that infest the day,
> Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
> And as silently steal away.—*Longfellow.*

LAND of song 's ingenious minstrels,
Beauteous land of glen and mount,
Thou resemblest bright Aurora
Smiling o'er a sparkling fount;
Or like virgin in a morning,
Free from gloom's soul-saddening shroud,
When the golden locks of Phœbus
Mingle with the orient cloud;
Or like mother o'er her infant
With a smile supremely sweet,
Nurturing a hardy offspring
In old ocean's far retreat.
Scotland! thy majestic mountains,
Crowned with snow each wizard height,
Seem the haunts of guardian spirits,
Those that scatter wide delight
Over thee without obstruction,
Over thee, my fatherland,
When the gall of hateful discord
Mars not music's charms so bland.
And innumerable warblers
Cheer and charm each happy grove,
Where the admired sweet-singing peasant
Orpheus-like woke strains of love

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Happy thoughts are now arising,
Stars o'er fancy's wondrous verge,
Soothing heart-depressing anguish
As they one by one emerge.
Various things all soul-enchanting,
Nature's face diversify,
As I gaze, enjoy, contemplate,
Whispers come like infant's sigh—
"Sentient being, adoration
Here is sought mid scenes so fair,
Lest their Maker thou forgettest,
And enjoyment turn despair.
Thou art curbed in sorrow's dwelling,
Prostrate on the path of woe;
Fly such dark, chaotic places,
To where milder pleasures flow;
Here the calm of soft retirement,
Rears the flower that 's wet with dew;
Here the smiles of Love and Virtue,
Life's uneven paths imbue;
Then be warned, let resistance
Fling aside each glossy gem
That allures the wayward ever,
Turn and touch not one of them."

Life 's replete with earnest whispers,
Ever breathing, ever strange!
Every day hath got its wonder,
Every hour bespeaks a change.
Wonders never cease to be, and
Time creates vicissitude,

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Still in unison, and grateful,
Man responds celestial good.
There are wonders thou mayest ponder,
Those far worlds—illustrious orbs!
Which the day's imperial monarch,
In his genial light absorbs!

Nature's robes are shedding sweetness,
When the tempests cease to howl,
Uncongenial, dark and lowering,
O'er the morn-smile of the soul.
Breasts susceptible of pleasure,
Open wide to all her charms,
Till Perfection's own emotions
Crowd the heart in gleaming swarms.
Like Diana in a bower,
Formed in grandly-coloured sky,
Is the soul, in musing gladness,
Hailing Nature through the eye!
How sublime, harmonious Nature,
Thou art to the studious mind,
That soul-filled, god-like sensorium—
World within a shell confined!
Thence comes thought in silent beauty,
Emanating like a stream
Through a strange, mysterious valley,
Gladdened by Sol's mirrored beam.
There imagination throned,
With her pinions spread on high,
Mid her bright astounding wonders,
Peers around with eagle eye!

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Where huge rocks throw lingering shadows,
O'er some fair land's ruined breast,
There full oft she loves to linger,
There full oft she loves to rest.
Where old towers, grey Gothic fabrics,
Seem to bow with reverence low,
To the graceful form of Luna,
There her wonders overflow!
Where the ancients' domes and temples
Crumble 'neath the file of time,
There her look is full of sadness,
And her language is sublime.
There she dreameth, calm, reflective,
While her eyes effuse their tears,
O'er the beauty that remaineth,
Then communes with vanished years!
Near sequestered tombs of Poets
She would, weeping, twine a wreath
Of flowers, the rarest in her garden,
Till those hallowed tombs would breathe!
Should her anguish pass unnoted?
Should her tears fall unperceived?
Those she mourns had wept for others,
And their breasts for others heaved.

Where, oh, Burns! is thy sweet spirit?
Roves it earth's far wilds among,
Where lone Philomel, most plaintive,
Chants her deep nocturnal song?
Hails it glorious Phœbus rising,
Where he seemeth but an eye

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Peeping through a vast creation,
  Rolling in eternity?
Dwells it in a world of angels,
  Where no darkness leads astray,
Souls through bright elysian valleys?
  Dwells it in eternal day?
Thither let my spirit hasten—
  Ha! what opens to my gaze?
Gulfs impervious, save through Heaven,
  Rocks and tanglings—maze on maze!
Here are precipices, dormant
  'Neath the sable wings of night,
Which engulf lone vagrant spirits
  In their lost, uncertain flight!
Mournful shadows, gloomy phantoms,
  Shapes fantastic ever wing
Their mysterious flights in Hades!
  Earth, I still will to thee cling!
But, begone! evasive visions,
  Dreary pictures, vanish, fly!
Come nor doubtful nor unreal,
  Thus to fascinate my eye.
Come ye thoughts of joy and sorrow,
  With your equal smiles and tears,
On the wings of equilibrium,
  From your viewless, spirit-spheres.

Sacred shades of slumb'ring minstrels
  Are enthroned, a seraph band,
Crowned with wreaths of deathless glory,
  In the far, the "Better Land!"

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Oh, my soul! that thou couldst join them—
Fly the constellations through—
In that far unsuffering region
Lost to man's imperious view!
Here like loose leaves, driven remorseless
Mid Life's wingèd whirlwind's play,
Must our mortal frames be tortured
Till they mingle with the clay!

From my sight, perplexing Folly,
Vanish with your naked shows;
Be your dwelling place Oblivion,
Lost in its unblest repose.
May my soul be ever free from
Vain, voluptuous desire,
And contentment find me scorning
All that thy ingredients fire.
Folly's shows and bright enamel
Seldom fail to lure the eye,
Whose glad stare doth not unfrequent
Feast on transient ecstacy.
But, beware! for how injurious
Is that vile, malignant thing
Germinating in the bosom
To become a baneful sting!
We behold it, doubly feel it,
When for health we sigh in vain!
Mortal, who shall weep and mourn you,
When inevitable pain
Twists you like a tender willow
On the couch of cold despair?

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Whilst thou breathest be forgiven,
Heaven is attained through prayer.
How unlike your former self you
Groan beneath death's frigid wing,
Vaguely staring, life's dull evening
'Fore your eyes evanishing!
Oh! to see the veilèd future!
Secrets dark beyond the grave!
Where, O soul! art thou sojourning,
When 'neath the Lethean wave
Body sleeps unknown, unthought on,
Save—"One sleepeth soundly here,
Who had flung aside each virtue
For the sweets of revels drear."
Turn from Folly's brooding dangers,
Set thy foot on Wisdom's throne,
Then thy life will be more tranquil,
Wisdom's beams will lead thee on—
On to pleasures unpolluted,
On to fountains sweet and clear,
On to groves, where music chimeth,
Painted by each passing year!
There mild, uncorrupted moments,
On the sunny path of bliss,
Roll along in star-like glory
Shedding gleams thy soul will kiss!
Fly from squalid haunts, where flaunting
Mortals revel, flout and brawl,
Those are full of dire contagion,
These a prey to misery fall!

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Candour reigns in upright bosoms;
Search thine, reader—reigns it there?
Ah, if not, life is a burden
Which thou art unfit to bear;
For thy brow marks thee ungrateful;
Frowning, like Cimmerian eve,
On thy fellow-mortal; wouldst thou
Triumph where thou couldst deceive?
But if thou dost cherish candour,
Happiness is truly thine:
Heartless kings, in costly baubles,
Weighed with theirs thy lot 's divine.

Turn thy gaze to yonder minion,
Big with arrogance and power,
All unconscious existence
Is to him as to a flower.
He may perish in his pleasure,
It may wither in its bloom;
Cold forgetfulness may shroud them
Both in an ignoble tomb!
Life is but a blossomed garland,
Worn by mortals for a time;
Every day its beauty fadeth—
Ruin's tooth gnaws things sublime!
Fame has dazzling eyes, and, truly,
Yonder minion basks full oft
In the lustre of her halo,
With distempered head aloft;
Whilst his mute dependants tremble
At his scornful, awful gaze,

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Pictured, false humiliation
Feels the whip and then obeys!
Who can trace Ambition's soaring
In the self-exalted mind?
Easier 'twere to pluck the feathers,
From thy fabled wings, O wind!
Balance well imagined greatness
In the scales thy reason holds;
Gaze in Affectation's mirror,
It unnumbered flaws unfolds.
He who deems himself the sagest
Pedant of his lack-brain race,
Leaves not room for others' praises—
Too much for his own disgrace.
Heaven claims our soul's devotion,
Not Ambition—soon it dies;
Earthly pageants are too fleeting
Man to be their sacrifice.
Battle for immortal glory,
Win the wreath that decks the soul;
Clasp the flower that sweetens life, and
Then defy Despair's black scowl.

While my eyes I raise to heaven
In this solemn stilly hour,
What a crowd of earnest feelings
Thrills my soul with sacred power!
Is't the grand, the headlong motion
Of the meteor's sudden sweep
Through the night's mysterious silence,
When the world seems wrapped in sleep?

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Or the moon—that, lovely empress,
Now embowered in clouds her form?
Or the many sparkling spangles
Far remote from Winter's storm,
That inspire these earnest feelings?
Surely yes, and these alone
Glow and burn full bright above us,
But their Maker's power to own.
Heaven is not visionary,
Not a fancied field of light,
But where philosophic daring
Gathers treasures in its flight.

Truth paints life in happy colours,
And the richness of its dyes
Flows in consonance of beauty
In the volumes of the wise.
He that's dazzled by Tradition
Seeks not Truth's far-guiding flame;
Each reality 's a vision,
Unessential, cold, and tame!
Truth's and Wisdom's rays descending,
Radiant in the heaven-taught mind,
Shed a lively light, ethereal,
O'er the paths of poor mankind!
What a glorious acquirement
Is a gleam from Wisdom's store!
Once possessed impending darkness
Fades before the sacred lore!
Ignorance, that meagre demon,
Still strides earth, unconquered, free,

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Grinning o'er the myriad victims
That must lost to Pallas be!
Yet his empire is but feeble,
For the light of Truth is shed,
Where, far, keen-eyed, Exploration
Learns with lightning-feet to tread.

Sage Experience, all welcome,
Thou hast affluence I prize;
Thou art one true source of knowledge,
Stirrer of our sympathies!
Thy development of *being*
Makes thee upon earth supreme!
Blessed they that feel thy presence—
That have felt thy sterner gleam.
Kings untaught by thee are reckless
In the greatness of their sway,
And their lives are oft insipid,
If untouched by thy stern ray.
Blest is he whom thy calm guidance
Leads with cautious step through life,
Free from many sensual revels,
And the scenes of listless strife;
But the inexperienced mortal,
How precipitately he
Dives into each worldly pleasure
Like a stone cast in the sea.
Sure Experience nobly teaches
Caution, vigilance, and love
Of contentment in our troubles,
That we may in life improve.

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And contentment with a little
  Tends to cheer, not sadden, man,
And to give, not mar, a blessing
  Which illumes his little span;
Thus, through time, experience teaches
  Us the moral of content,
Till the tenor of our being
  Is with happy moments blent.

Wine has pleasures, wine has sorrows,
  Yet essential is to one
Whose life-cheering hope is vanished
  From a heart that seems undone.
Gods and mortals are alike the
  Worshippers of rosy wine;
'Tis a source of inspiration,
  Gilding thought with fire divine.
When in loneliness repining,
  How it buoys the sinking soul
With its ruddy sparks, phosphoric
  Seeming in the goodly bowl!
'Tis a fount where weary travellers
  Lay their burden of despair,
And, respiring, half-indulgent,
  Drain the precious goblet there.
'Tis a fount whence countless travellers
  Bring despair, disease, and death!—
Who professes Virtue only
  Lives in wine, has shallow faith;—
But those travellers are excessive—
  Moderation is unknown;

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Thus they sink into the drunkard's
Woeful tomb with many a groan!
But the cautious, close observer
Of mild moderation still
Mingles in the meet enjoyments
Tending life with bliss to fill.
Wine 's the luxury that Poets
Feast on, when afar they soar
Through the cloudy skies of myst'ry
To Elysium's sunny shore;
Thence they bring a train of wonders,
Which enchant the list'ning world,
And their scrolls of breathing beauties
Are to admiring man unfurled.

I have done—my Muse is weary,
And her pinions lack their power;
And she beckons sleep unto her—
Sleep, that sweet reposing flower!
Gentle sleep, my vain resistance
Fails to ward thy pleasing spell;
Come, then, take me to thy bosom
As I bid the world—Farewell!

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JAMIE AN' TIBBIE.

(After Wilson.)

"TIBBIE, is the supper ready?"
Jamie speired, when he cam' hame,
Soiled wi' workin' in the smiddy,
Sair forfouchten was his frame.

"No," cried Tibbie dour and sullen
As a sow in gorgeous weed;
"Nae mair sense ye hae yer skull in
Than a hen has in her head.

"Sin' the morn I hae been washin'
A' yer claes, ye lazy hog,
Through the mire bare-fittet splashin'.
What care ye, ye *thowless* dog.

"How could I syne mak' yer supper,
Conjurer o' a' my woes?
Speir again an' wi' this slipper,
Bluid I'se gar spout frae your nose.

"Day an' night ye are my torment,
Speirin' what ye canna get;
Wad yer bones were cauld an' dormant
As the wisdom o' yer pate!

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"Day by day ye haud me slavin'
Like a' nigger o' the East;
Wheepin' slyly—daily cravin'
Usquebae, ye shachled beast.

"Ere I kent ye I was happy,
Virtuous, and innocent;
But I gat ye fond o' nappy,
Where yer sense an' siller went.

"Oh that I had never kent ye,
Never in yer presence smiled,
Never had my bosom lent ye
Like a wee obedient child!

"Heavens! I'm amaist deleerit!
How sin' syne I've suffered for't—
Wasted frame, an' broken spirit,
A' for ye, ye pile o' dirt!"

"Tibbie, ye are wrang, an' wrang me,
Ye yersel hae caused yer wae;
Sooner wad I gae an' hang me
Than I'd hear sic nonsense mae.

"I've been kin' sin' first I gat ye,
Poortith seldom reached our ha';
An' when carking cares gat at ye,
Tibbie, they were soon awa'.

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"I've been eydent, honest, simple,
Ay! ower big a simpleton,
Else my stream o' life wad wimple
Doon its brae, wi' milder sun

"Shinin' on its saft meander;
But 'tis otherwise, for ye
Dim its glow, mak' dull its splendour,
Marrin' peace eternally!

"But I'se bide wi' ye nae langer,
For yer tongue is never lame;
Howl, ye Jezebel o' clangour,
Hell is sweeter than my hame!"

"Gang, ye drucken sow o' Bacchus,
Find a mair respected house;
May the ills an' ways that rack us
Mortals crush ye like a l——!"

Being weel accustomed till her
Rhetoric at e'en an' morn,
Jamie took his sweat-earned siller—
Flung it in the fire wi' scorn;

"Tibbie, howl yer grim orations,"
This was a' he sadly said;
Syne, wi' Job's prophetic patience,
Coolly, calmly gaed to bed.

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TO THE GOBLET.

HAIL, Goblet, hail! Thy draught divine
Awakes long-slumbering wit again;
So long as I may deem thee mine,
The darts of grief are hurled in vain.

Thou art the sun that warms my soul,
That warms with life each frigid thought
That sleeps in Embryo's secret goal,
Each birth thou makest beauty-fraught.

Sure Poets, celebrated more
Than I dare hope to be, have been
Strange pupils of thy mystic lore,
Sweet bards that died to live, I ween.

Yes, mighty bards of other years
Awoke the harp of Zion's hill,
And songs that softened man to tears;
True they were thine admirers still.

And I like them will honour thee,
With lute and song, though these I own
May fail to charm; thus though it be,
They lack the gloom of Acheron.

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Full well I know that man is doomed,
To visit cells concealed in earth,
Still myriads in those cells entombed,
Once deigned to call the soul of mirth!

And shall I dash thee to the ground,
Because a mortal's feeble voice
Dissuades me from the draught profound!
No! I will bless thee and rejoice!

Let those that fain would pierce the mist
Of veiled futurity, still scan,
Then learn how vain 'tis to resist
The final draught awaiting man!

Still, Goblet, hail! Thy draught divine
Has banished traitor Care again;
So long as I may deem thee mine,
The darts of grief are hurled in vain!

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TO SOMEBODY.

If prayers avail to make thee blest,
Mine shall be frequent for thy weal,
And hope shall cheer my lonely breast
When I no more thy presence feel;
And angel-dreams will oft reveal
Thy image to the eye of sleep,
For slumber cannot thee conceal
Howe'er intense, however deep.

My mind shall have a sleepless thought,
That thought shall be but thee alone;
All other joys may come unsought,
And go and be for ever gone;
But my existence is thine own,
Our souls unite beneath the spell
That lights the torch of hope, though grown
Less brilliant at the word—Farewell!

TWILIGHT.

'Tis sweet to be alone, and of one's thoughts
Sole, undisputed monarch. King of these,
One sways the sceptre of a wondrous tribe.
With them I hold communion, when they flit
Within the chambers of creative mind,
Like midges dancing in the mellow rays

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That Phœbus darts abroad when gentle eve
Begins to close the leaves of fragrant flowers.
Such thoughts I often have at gloaming grey,
For Nature's unity delights my soul.

And now the golden wings of day begin
To flag apace, and mountain-shadows throw
Themselves along the voiceless lawn, where all
The soft magnificence of rural walks
Sinks at the dewy touch of sweet repose.
And silence smooths recesses of the wild,
Except that the melodious flow is heard
Of laughing streamlets; and the nightingale,
Where sleeps the rose in dreamy pride, pours forth
With voice most beautiful, his heavenly song,
As if to give the changeless tune of cold
Monotony a chord, whose varied sweetness
Enchants the listening ear, and rivals all
The wondrous harmony of all the spheres!

And mark yon shadowy mountain pierce afar
The azure radiance of the firmament;
It's summit seems the stepping-stone of stars,
That seem to leap from it, then spread aloft
Their fiery wings, then, like an angel host,
March on, all lustre and mysterious silence!

Look! and admire—a new ethereal blaze
Is now infusing joy into the clouds
Of fleecy grandeur floating spirit-like

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Above the mountains' placid summits; stars
Diminish in the flamy presence, and
Are dazzled by the too superior sheen;
Yes—'tis the herald of the lovely Dian;
And as her bright, majestic form appears,
Old Ocean holds his mirror to reflect
The graceful image of the one he loves;
And rivulets, with mimic ecstasy,
Yet bliss unfeigning, on her beauty dwell,
And hailing shout from humble earth to heaven!

TO JEANNIE.

Remember, Jeannie, auld lang syne
On Beauly's broomy brae,
Hoo there ye vowed yer heart was mine,
An' wad be mine for aye.

The flowers seemed brighter roun' that spot,
The lav'rock's early sang
Seemed sweeter syne; noo a's forgot,
An' Jamie too may gang!

That vow was written on the sand
O' woman's constancy,
Ower which Time drew his witherin' hand
An' blastet it—not me!

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But, though I thole nae rivin' smart,
I'se, tentless o' ilk pang,
Weigh weel the worth o' woman's heart,
An' whistle as I gang.

SHE LAY IN BEAUTY.

She lay in beauty, like the rose
Reclining on its dewy bough;
She smiled in sleep as if her woes
Were all for ever vanished now.

A tear might glisten in her eye,
But still her slumber knew no care
That summoned an unwonted sigh
From one so faultless, matchless, fair.

And did she dream? Then 'twas of heaven,
For earthly dreams, a sage might say,
Have never yet one solace given,
That sweetened life another day!

Conversed she with the spirits sweet
That crowd the groves of paradise?
Or those that tread with rosy feet
The golden clouds of heavenly skies!

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Such converse were indeed a bliss,
To soul so new to earth, and pure;
Sweet absence is from world like this,
Where Death must reign, and man endure!

Though 't was a dream, dreams are but links
That lengthen life's mysterious chain
Of problems, which the Sage who *thinks*,
Fails to unriddle or explain!

SONG OF LIBERTY.

Sons of Liberty, arise
Like a Tempest in the skies;
Be your universal sweep
O'er the mountain and the deep;
Be your empire, like the sea,
Boundless, mighty, ever free,
Sons of Liberty!

Sound the clarion of fame,
But to Freedom's eagle-name;
He that listens, still a slave,
Dares but envy you, ye brave!
Fettered let him sink unknown
'Neath the chains around him thrown;
Ours is Liberty.

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Britain! Freedom's glorious shrine,
Gift ethereal, is thine;
See thy banners o'er a world
Still triumphantly unfurled!
Or to death or victory
Let our war song ever be
Britain! Liberty!

THE FLOWER O' THE WEST.

A BONNIE Scotch lassie cam' over the brae,
When Nature was robed in her brightest array,
Her cheeks were like roses, o' azure her e'e,
Her lips were like cherries, but sweeter to me.

Her beautiful neck an' her bosom were bare,
An' elf-ringlets wantoned sae gracefully there,
Sic ravishin' charms left a flame in my breast,
That slept not, but burned for the flower o' the West.

She had mony wooers o' ilka degree,
Frae laird o' the castle to swain on the lea,
The former had siller, the latter had nane
But ae lovin' heart, an' for ever 't was gane!

Though fair as the lily, an' pure as the snaw,
Young Annie was glaiket and lo'ed nane ava,
She deemed hersel' happy, wi' minnie sae blest,
And ills wad aye shun, the flower o' the West.

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But oh! when she happet the score o' her teens,
An' twenty sweet simmers o' amorous scenes,
Left Annie to dream ower the joys o' the past,
She shyly submitted to wedlock at last;

An' on an auld bachelor laird she gat wed,
The auld sow o' Mammon guid siller had paid;
But lang ere a towmond ills, waes, an' unrest,
Had blastit for ever the flower o' the West!

ROBIN REID.

LET mighty Poets wake the shell,
That mantles mankind wi' a spell,
But I will sing to please mysel',
O' hamely cheerfu' Robin

O' frien's the best, an', when he 's fou,
The wale o' company I trow;
An' where he is, there 's laughter too:
A hearty lad is Robin.

Wi' merry hearts his ain is free,
For siller he cares no a flea,
But spen's it aye to ae bawbee,
A wanton lad is Robin.

Digitized by Google

An' when his folk embrace repose,
Hoo softly by them Robin goes;
An' oot he slips—e'en lat them doze,
'Tis a' the same to Robin.

'Tis nae sae strange he lo'es the night,
That Luna rules aboon fu' bright,
For Nature syne transmits delight
Mair ways than ane to Robin.

Nae human mind 's as pure as snaw,
The purest has some *little* flaw,
Sae tak' gay Robin a' in a',
An' ca' him honest Robin.

STANZAS ON A SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Ye angels o'er this beauty bend,
And watch her guileless spirit long;
Bid Heaven its brightest visions send,
And sooth her sleep with sacred song;
For heaven itself glows in her look,
Like sunshine in a crystal brook.

Digitized by Google

So calm, so still, so innocent,
Unknowing and unknown she lies;
Sure charms like those were never meant,
To be the toys of vulgar eyes.
What fascination o'er the soul
That snaps the cord of self-control!

There 's music in her breathing, and
Occasionally comes a sigh,
Which seems a gentle pause ('t is grand,
Yet sad) in Sleep's soft harmony!
Ah! can a silent sorrow gnaw
A heart perchance that knows no flaw?

Her lips might flout Astarte's own,
So sweet they seem, those seals of love!
Like blossoms into cherries grown
Where Houris guard the garden-grove;
And then those eyes—those blessed eyes
Like black-eyed nymphs of paradise!

And raven ringlets loosely lie,
Like shadows o'er a sea of snow,
Across a breast whose canopy
Is angel-wings of fiery glow.
Demur not that a soul be there
In one so beautiful, so fair.

As sleeps the rose in tranquil bliss,
Where the enamoured bulbul long

Digitized by Google

Pours forth that luscious lay of his,
The rose seems listening to the song;
So sleeps yon beauty, like the rose,
But naught she of the bulbul knows!

TO ELIZA.

When woe's dark tempests o'er my soul
In mournful shadows darkening roll,
And sad conceptions vex my brain,
Slow darts of silent, gnawing pain,
What solace like Eliza?

When aught affliction does infest
This pensive heart within my breast,
A graceful form with smiles appears
That ev'n life's dreariest hour endears:
The form is thine, Eliza.

Like morning fair thou comest now
To brush care's furrows from my brow,
And to my throbbing heart reveal
Thou art an angel come to heal
Its many wounds, Eliza.

The firmament with worlds of light
Shall pass for ever from my sight;

Digitized by Google

The icy wings of death shall chill
This mortal shrine, impaired by ill,
Ere I prove false, Eliza.

And showers that bathe sweet, spotless flowers
Shall cease to fall in happy hours;
Flowers cease to bud, streams cease to flow,
Ere I can change: where'er I go
My heart is thine, Eliza.

While in this fair terrestrial sphere
I breathe, Eliza, thou art dear!
And now—one transitory smile—
One kiss unheard—now for a while
A soft farewell, Eliza!

THE UNKNOWN.

In the desert's lone walks, who with solitude talks
Of his fair one, his pure one that's gone,
When the moon calmly dreams 'mid her beautiful beams,
When the winds have a sorrowful moan,
When the numberless eyes of magnificent skies
Seem to mourn with the mourner and list to his sighs!
'Tis a stranger—unpitied, unknown,
'Tis a man who is still unknown.

Digitized by Google

Oft he sits by a stream, as if wrapped in a dream,
But his cheeks are most ghastly and wan,
And oft lifting his eyes he contemplates the skies,
As if angels did weep there for man.
"Oh, ye spirits of light, in your regions so bright,
Bear me hence from the chill, hollow shadows of night
That incessantly darken the span
Of my life—'tis a mournful span!

"Ah, my Annie so true, do my cheeks' sickly hue
Make your blest, sainted spirit to weep?
You descend from above through the power of love,
With your bosom afflicted full deep;
And I hear your soft sigh, as a tear from your eye
Gently falls on my cheek when exhausted I lie
In a grove, lightly cradled in sleep—
In a grove in my restless sleep!

"Then I wake, and I start, with a grief at my heart,
When I feel your sweet spirit no more;
And I see ever there but a blank, cold, despair,
So my life grows as dark as before;
And the winds sadly whine, and the stars coldly shine,
But I feel not, I hear not your accents divine,
And a night-tide of gloom veils me o'er—
And a dim shadow moveth o'er!

"When the ocean I watch, and the wild notes I catch
Of its far-sounding, musical wave,
I remember the day that has torn you away,
When my hand was too feeble to save;

Digitized by Google

And my breast's wounded core becomes rent on the shore,
And I fly to your sepulchre, life, love, to pour
All my heart o'er your unadorned grave—
All my soul o'er your lonely grave!"

It is thus he repines when the dreamy moon shines
With her rays o'er the drowsy earth thrown;
And he feels, and he thinks, and despairingly sinks
On the grave of the fair one that 's gone;
And for ever in gloom by her desolate tomb
Still is seen, when the slow-marching night 'gins to loom,
The lone form of the hopeless Unknown,
The writhed form of the poor Unknown!

AT LAST I'M FREE.

At last I 'm free—the link is snapt
That chained me to thy side;
My soul, so long in darkness wrapt,
Once more stems freedom's tide.

Thine adamantine heart is chill
In death's unconscious sleep;
Oh, sleep! though dreamless, slumber still,
I dare not for thee weep!

Digitized by Google

For it were vain, ay doubly vain,
On such a tomb as thine,
To shed a tear!—wear long the chain
Thy prayers would make mine!

I have no tear for such as thee,
No sigh for one my hate
Abandons to the stagnant sea
Of Lethe and of Fate!

EPISTLE TO A. L.

Oh, Muse immortal! whose celestial fire
Dull thousands borrow from a master-lyre;
If in a mortal there be aught divine,
'Tis when his soul is fraught with gleams of thine!
If not in vain I pray, thus Poets sing,
Who gather gems shed from thy mystic wing,
Vouchsafe one gleam that gilds undying song
To me who worshipped thee full oft and long.

To thee, dear friend, I strike the humble chord
That may thy sleepless memory afford
A thought that pleases; or, perchance recall
Those sunny scenes oblivion fails to pall.
Obstruction chills not beauty's genial thought
Engendered in thy mind, so nobly fraught
With glowing sparks that knew the shrine of heaven,
Ere such to thee by seraph-hands were given!

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But what avails the hollow boast of art,
The witless mimicry of pedant's heart?
Not Cleonus aspires to boastful lore,
But, oh! his soul reverts to days of yore,
Which in thy mirror, gentle Memory!
In panoramic view, meet Psyche's eye;
Each scene is radiant, blending the sublime
With lasting memories untouched by Time.

Sublimity, a language of its own
To studious, thinking minds full oft makes known;
Which, once acquired, is like the notes of love
That angels utter round the throne of Jove!
Indelible impressions fire the mind
And glow like pearls in ocean-caves enshrined.
But thou art fully sensible of this,
For thou canst wake the chord that ushers bliss
Into the dark recesses of a breast,
That else had known the gall of cold unrest!

Thy genius is like a goodly tree
That spreads its blossoms on a winged sea
Of sweetest incense! Thus, in minds like mine,
Thou sow'st sterility with thoughts divine!
Like Ocean—image of Infinitude—
Thy mind hath gems that lie beneath the flood
Of its own vast creations! Grandly they
Emerge, and on the surface far display
Ethereal lustre, nursed within the deep,
Where beauties yet undreamt of sparkling sleep!

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Oh! to unbosom that which most I feel,
A something which I cannot all reveal,
Yet cannot name; but, burning in my soul,
Enzones it in an infinite control!

The wisdom of Cleobulus might serve
A self-created sorrow to unnerve;
But not retrieve a soul that 's sunk below
The dim horizon of eternal woe!

Serenely still, undaunted, undismayed,
I view the future thrown in sombre shade,
Events innumerable hidden there
Nor eye can penetrate, nor soul can dare!
But deep engraven on my memory's page
The glorious counsel of an ancient sage:—
'Tis "Fear not Death"—a counsel truly wise,
And intimates a life beyond the skies;
Shun glory, ne'er an hour to life it gave,
"The path of glory leads but to the grave!"

But why select a melancholy theme
When—half indulgent in a happy dream
Of thee, of joy, and friends that are no more,
To such the Muse might lend her mystic lore—
I might have struck a sweeter, merrier note,
Or lent my shell a lighter, gayer thought?
But it is o'er. Some future hour perchance,
Should Muse so humble lend an equal glance,
May waft my song to that facetious end
That may bespeak a *Poet's* grateful friend.

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A PRAYER.

OMNISCIENT Father, hear my prayer !
Oh, save my guilty soul,
Ere it be veiled by dark despair,
And everlasting dole !

A death-cold circumambient gloom
Floats o'er my sinking heart !
Delay, All-good, the awful doom,
For thou Almighty art.

I would not die a sordid thing,
All lost to truth and light,
Thy laws and precepts slandering
From day's grey dawn till night.

Guide Thou my footsteps on the path
That holy Martyrs trod ;
'Tis terrible to meet Thy wrath,
Great sin-avenging God !

In youth I learnt that Thou wast great ;
Thy sacred Scriptures tell
That torments dire on all await,
Who 'gainst Thy name rebel.

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Oh ! save me from those torments dire,
For Thou canst save alone
Poor wretched mortals from the fire,
Where damnèd spirits groan !

Pardon, my God, my wickedness,
From troubles set me free,
And vile temptations, pleasureless,
That lure my heart from Thee.

And save me from th' untimely tomb,
Or gently let me drop
Into the earth's peace-giving womb ;
Yet, dying, let me hope,

That sweet felicity and joy
Upon my soul await,
In heaven's pure vales, where music's sigh
Proclaims, the Lord is great !

EPIGRAM.

A FAULTY woman has a good excuse
For every error she commits ; and so,
All ladies, who have wondrous ears for news,
Will tell you all, and more than all they know.

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CHLORIS.

'Tis May morn, love, awake, awake,
The lav'rock sings sae sweetly o'er us,
An' little birds chant in the brake
A cheerfu', sweet, celestial chorus.
The lambkin sports on sunny lea,
Where daisies bloom untouched by Boreas;
The scene is blest—why absent be,
My beautiful, my gentle Chloris?

The blackbird warbles on the brae,
Where streamlets wimple down sae cheery;
Nae howlet's dolefu' notes o' wae
Will bid my Chloris to be eerie,
But scenes an' mem'ries knit wi bliss,
Fair haunts o' lovers lang afore us;
The flowery briers will stoop to kiss
Thy virgin feet, my lovely Chloris.

The lordly minion may be blest
In fortune's lap, wi' favours smilin',
But luxury's delicious nest
Is aft the den o' base beguilin'!
Unease, unrest, engender care,
An' meikle wi' the rich in store is;
Though we hae some how sma 's our share
Compared wi' theirs, my gentle Chloris.

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The deer an' roe lo'e to be free;
The maukin wad avert ilk danger;
The captive sighs for liberty,
When in the chains o' ruthless stranger!
Oh, then beware vile Mammon's art,
Which stronger, love, than angel-lore is;
Turn, turn to me, for my poor heart
Is ever thine, my dearest Chloris.

CHURCH BELLS.

It is sweet on Sabbath days,
In the happy Granite City,
To hear the music bells tolling long their seraph lays,
Golden notes exceeding pretty,
Of awe, of love, of praise;
'Tis a soul-exulting ditty
That, with soft and solemn warning, mellifluously tells
Earnest mortals in their homes
That the hour of worship comes;
Oh 'tis bliss to listen, listen to the music of the bells,
The sweet church bells!

Such a flow of luscious rhyme
From their swinging caves is swelling!
And how wondrously far flies each silver-threaded chime,
Sweetly liquid stories telling
As they flow, flow in time
O'er each heaven-protected dwelling!

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What a symphony of beautifully mild echoes wells
In the stilly Sabbath morn,
All mysteriously borne
By the bearer of sweet accents, from soft-breathing bells,
The sweet church bells!

I have listened to their slow
Music, rhythmical, enchanting;
Now majestically wild, now subdued and soothing, low,
Much like tiny bosoms panting,
Softly murmuring woe.
Joyful sounds—loved spirits haunting
Psyche's thus enriched existence—are those sounds, mellow knells.
Ever chiming in mine ear,
Like the voice of some one dear,
Is the spirit-melting cadence of the music of the bells,
The sweet church bells!

THE SUICIDE.

Time was when mirth would glad my heart,
And solace to my soul impart;
But that good time is gone, for now
Care coils himself upon my brow;
And heart-corroding sorrows cling,
With cold annihilation's sting,

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Around my being, like yon zone
Around night's mournful empress thrown!
Life seems a wilderness to me—
A dismal desert, or a sea
Where hopes and joys, beneath its wave,
Are cradled in a mirror-grave!
This frowning rock on which I stand,
Though in its barren wildness grand,
Seems hushed in death; else why so bare,
Cold, humid, as a thing of air?
Its gloomy shape has terror for
A mortal that of life would more,
To breathe, and yet awhile put up
With miseries that brim its cup;
To me 'tis a familiar friend,
O'er which the solemn phantoms bend
Of other years. Strange shadows here
I've seen, and known, when chanticleer
Had slumbered on the roost; and when
Sleep drugged the eager ears of men,
And drew its veil before the eye
That would into night's secrets pry.
Ah, I remember, when a boy
I used to seek this rock with joy
To rest upon its bosom long,
When birds had ceased their varied song;
Whilst those who watched my tender years,
Way-laid by doubts, forebodings, fears,
Would search amidst the crowd, and strain
Their tearful eyes, for me in vain!

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But they have slept for years, and sleep
As quietly as ever—deep,
And mysterious slumber. Oh,
Sleepers, your secrets dark to know!

Do the dead dream? Do spirits see,
(Those thoughts which flood eternity!)
Clay things, in which they learned to sigh,
In hopeful bliss, or dreaming lie?
Do both commune together? or,
Part they at death to meet no more?
This seemeth strange, but ere an hour
Shall add a tint to budding flower
In summer's vase, my soul shall know
Eternal bliss or endless woe!
For life hath nothing new to give,
Nor mortal in it bids me live;
A year ago 'twas otherwise,
For love brought pleasures from the skies;
But oh! how transient was their stay,
They fled as closed the eye of day,
And made themselves a tomb in night,
But *here* for ever left the blight!
The throbs of agony are *here!*
Each moment seems a hellish year
Of fatal fire!—a flaming spell
That burns my bosom like a hell!—
A hell of torture, not of fear;
Fear fails to rouse a groan or tear;
Tear's fount is dry, or frozen seems,
Like region hid from Phœbus' beams.

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Hark !—war ye elements ! I feel
Most glorious at each thund'ring peal
That howls along the lowering skies,
Where chainless Chaos frowning flies !
Ha ! mark yon bleak cloud in the north,
Whose shapeless form now vomits forth
A tongue of flame ! E'en darkness starts,
And for a moment night departs !
Meet hour to hail thy sting, O Death,
And yield at last a wretched breath !
To bid a heartless world farewell,
Where my existence is a hell !
One headlong plunge, and then I part
With pangs eternised in my heart ;
To world of woe, or world of bliss
I reck not—I am gone from this !

ROSA—1864.

Lovely Rosa, like a flower
Bloomin' in some lanely place
Where the seraphs lo'e to wander,
Love smiles in her bonnie face.
See her ringlets gently wavin'
Owre a bosom white as snaw,
Auburn ringlets smooth an' glossy ;
Lovely Rosa, charming Rosa,
Jamie ne'er a fairer saw.

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As the lambkin Rosa 's gentle,
Angels weep when Rosa pines,
Gracefu', too, an' spotless, bonnie,
Fortune's wreath her heart entwines ;
An' her voice is sweet an' mellow,
Thrillin' through my heart—but ah !
Wae is me, I darena lo'e thee,
Lovely Rosa, cruel Rosa,
Jamie ne'er a fairer saw.

Cease, my heart, thy ardent beatin',
Ask not Rosa, oh 'tis vain !
Rather bear unwelcome sorrow,
Rosa ne'er will soothe thy pain !
Frae the sparklin' fount o' pleasure
Transient are the rays that fa'—
Vanished now, perchance for ever !
Lovely Rosa, lost, lost Rosa,
Jamie ne'er a fairer saw !

THOU GROW'ST IN BEAUTY.

Thou grow'st in beauty, and thy years
But waft thee to perfection's heaven,
And purest virtues lull the fears—
The looming shades of distant even.

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Sweet flower! to mark the light divine
That fills thine eyes with azure glory,
Is not a theme for lyre like mine,
That only feigns to grace a story.

But ah! while friendship draws me near
Thy guileless heart, I cannot sever
With—Hope?—Not Hope, but *one* so dear,
For I would gaze on thee for ever?

A mirror thou 'rt, in which my soul
Beholds its own unblest reflection;
Yet loves to gaze, as if its whole,
Or shattered form embraced perfection!

Ah! let thy memory still cling
To childhood's years—how oft lamented!—
And when thou hearest wild birds sing,
Remember me, and I'm contented.

For childhood's joys can never die,
Nor be erased from memory's pages;
They are like ocean's gems that lie,
And lay in pearly caves long ages.

Invaluable, sacred joys,
Untarnished by the gloom of folly,
Which oft domestic bliss destroys,
And veils the heart in melancholy!

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Sweet maiden! I must cease my song,
  Though I could seek no dearer pleasure
Than be far-borne with thee among
  The scenes my heart and thine must treasure.

Farewell! that word 's a fount of tears
  Wrung from the heart and eye at parting;
It clouds futurity with fears,
  And stings the heart already smarting!

And, yet, it must be said—Farewell!
  It bodes not that our hearts must sever;
They blend 'neath friendship's kindred spell,
  Oh that they thus might blend for ever!

THE POET.*

He was—is not; but strange! his noble name
  Is raised beyond the burst of scandal base;
Those who would hurl their venom on his fame
  Are mites whose dull propensities embrace
At once th' almighty gewgaws—pence and praise:
  But shall they thus perturb th' illustrious dead
By sounding scandal's trumpet o'er the blaze
  That was, and is, by fires celestial fed,
On which nor blight has fallen nor uncongenial shade?

* Published in the Delhi Gazette (India), Nov. 1869.

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No! by the spirits of the hallowed throng,
Whose dust would startle from a thousand urns
To hear his name; that soul of heartfelt song!
By parasitic pedants, skilled by turns
To praise and censure, lightly uttered. Burns
Their rankling breasts with unavailing ire?
The admirer pauses, and, astonished, spurns
The soulless minion who would quench the fire,
That years have only fanned to make the flame swell higher!

Since he 's no more, who is the bard of might
That stirs the soul with grandeur's wildest sweep,
And leads us up the mountain's giddy height,
Where transitory, lurid lightnings leap
From crag to crag; till into chasms deep
And dark they vanish—mute? Because there's none.
Not even the *florid Bard*, whose pages heap
On groaning shelves, which dust has failed to shun,
Can near the bright source of his fame—a cloudless sun.

Who now depicts war-scenes—that gory field,
Death's awful empire, where unerring steel,
And throats of iron, make the mighty yield?
Who points to giant War, at whose red heel
Recline wrecked nations, and their monarchs kneel,
Subdued—despairing, whom Ambition taught
To clasp a universe? No bards reveal
Latent beauties—triumphs of glorious thought—
Like him whose mighty mind with deathless gleams was fraught.

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Then, shall the limpid streamlet of his fame
Be frozen by the chilling breath of hate?
Shall blackfaced scandal fling upon his name
The peccant veil that would annihilate
The brightest name that ever shone? Could fate
But wake the Poet from his dreamless trance,
Would mortals tremble who calumniate
A fame deserved? Would she—*who?*—countenance
The stern, reproving *something* in his fiery glance?

He laid his hand upon the ocean's breast,
And felt it heave in virgin purity
Beneath the gentle pressure; and caressed
Magnificent creations Fancy's eye
Embodied into beauteous forms with high
And godlike intellects! With magic lay
He conjured up from mantled mystery
Those beauties which eclipse the grandest ray
Of wisdom-feigning, sing-song Poets of to-day.

He searched the human heart, and reached the soul,
O'er which he poured the nectar of his love;
The balmy redolence through bosoms stole,
Like winged odours through a sacred grove!
A sweeter bard ne'er summoned was by Jove
To sweeten life with dulcet charms of song!
What gods inspire shall mortals disapprove?
Oh, children of audacity! how long
Shall ye be occupants of temples deemed so strong?

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We live between the past and future, and
Our lives, like mirrors breathed upon, are dim;
And, thus, events *to be*, however scanned,
Display but hazy outlines, chill and grim,
O'er which impenetrable vapours swim—
Curtains which veil futurity! Then let
The present be the portion blest of him,
And all that would an ill-spent past forget,
Nor spurn the ashes of the dead—the vanquished great!

FOR EVER WITH THEE.

THE mild sunbeams rest, like a mantle of gold,
On the breast of the deep, where the big wave is rolled,
And the tempest is hushed; and the song-birds invite
To their Tempes of beauty, of love and delight;
I care not for these, love, my heart is with thee,
Where thou art, 'tis there too my heaven must be,
For ever with thee.

In the dungeon, or dark, frowning chambers of night
Where each terror appals, and grim shadows affright,
Or in Edens of bliss where no sorrows intrude
On the peace reigning there, on the sweet solitude;
I care not, in either my heart is with thee,
Where thou art there too, love, my heaven must be,
For ever with thee.

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TO A LADY.

If Nature formed me with a heart
Susceptible of things divine,
Believe me, whosoe'er thou art,
It is no fault of mine.

If it be sin to love—admire—
That which enchants and makes us sigh,
Or warms the soul with heavenly fire,
Then truly sinned have I.

If 'twere a fault, admiringly,
To mark perfection's solemn air,
Ah! then I must a culprit be,
Because thou art so fair.

If foolishly I followed *then*,
Thou knowest folly was the game;
The game I lost—I feel a stain
Self-painted on my name.

But woman's heart is toned so well
With pity, tenderness, and heaven,
That hope does every fear dispel,
And breathes the word—"forgiven."

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TO ANNIE.

FAIR is yon rose that early sheds
  Its incense sweet around
The countless flowers and dewy blades
  That beautify the ground.

But thou art fairer, purer still;
  What witching charms are thine!
They break my rest: I fear they will
  Soon break this heart of mine.

If I might love thee, I would deem
  Myself an heir to joy;
But oh, I only vainly dream
  A long unbroken sigh.

For, Annie, thou another's art,
  And happy. What of me?
Unweed thyself, my foolish heart,
  Of woman worthy be.

WHEN SOMETIMES WE THINK.

WHEN sometimes we think on the friends we have known,
  The friends that are sepulchred low in the tomb,
We sigh, and our bosoms beat hollow in tone;
  We weep, for between us lie silence and gloom.

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We see their kind faces on memory's page,
  We hear their soft voices like echoes afar,
Long whispering solace our woes to assuage,
  With sad intimations of what we now are.

Ah! when I recall the dear presence of *one*,
  Whose tenderer feelings were ever aglow,
Who guarded my steps like a heaven-sent sun,
  My heart seems to burst through its fulness of woe.

True, hope lingered long in the depth of my breast,
  And gilded sad fancies with Joy's fickle beams,
And soothed dark forbodings in moments of rest,
  And lulled my existence with musical dreams.

But Hope, like a bird on a blossomy bough,
  Sang melodies heavenly, too heavenly to last,
Then vanished. Despair coiled himself on my brow,
  And all save long-lingering sorrow is past.

THOUGHTS IN A CHURCHYARD.

Look on this mound, this grave,
  Such all must one day share;
This deep sepulchral cave
  Bids all of us prepare!

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This is the couch at last
For weary heart and head,
When earthly ills are past,
And worldly pleasures fled.

Though rubies deck thy brow,
And emeralds, sapphires blaze
Around thy being now,
Behold thy end of days!

Though precious stones and gold
Be thine in countless heaps,
Avails thy wealth untold,
When death upon thee creeps?

The whole is like a dream,
A weary watch by night,
A vainly glowing gleam;
A fleetly passing light!

For *here*, when all is o'er,
Behold the vanity
Of worldly wealth and store,
Of pleasures winged to fly!

Think! Is the lesson true?
Yea—own it with a sigh!
Here friends must part; here too
Man is a mystery!

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PHILOSOPHY OF DOUBT.

THOU spirit of my life—preach! what art thou?
I've studied thee with keen, unflinching eye,
Until the sweat of wonderment had left my brow,
Till I became, as 'twere, an unreality,
Incomprehensible unto myself, and all
But shadow wandering meaningless o'er this lone ball
Which the Omnipotent hath named—Earth.

I've gazed upon the ocean, crystalline
And placid—dark, tempestuous, or madly
Heaving its watery pulses on the startled whine
Of the loose-winged gale, until a something sadly
Might breathe the solemn meaning of that mighty whole
So fraught with import to the wonder-seeking soul,
But all I learned by this was—to admire.

I've looked unwearied on the stars by night,
And measured far unfathomable space,
Holding communion with those glowing specks of light,
Whose beams might revel coldly on my pallid face;
This, this had but awoke a chaos in the mind
That darkened gleams, which Truth in Reason's dome
enshrined,
And veiled the mystic vista for a time.

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And I have visited the kingdom of
The silent, when magnificently shone
With studded fire the firmament, around, above,
And felt a holiness in being thus alone
Among the sepulchres grim of that kingdom old,
And heard the stories sad the sculptured tombstones told;
Each told its stirring story as I passed.

'Twas of a mortal who had weary grown
Of the vicissitudes and scenes of life,
A life well spent, or ill, or days all reckless thrown
Upon the wheel of time, sore with the blows of strife,
Or shrieks of mirth; all slept in unmolested sleep:
I felt a thrill unutterable o'er me creep
When questioning myself—Where is the soul?

Then, spirit of my life, a thought would breathe
Thy name—then turn to Him that walketh on
The sheeted lightning's verge, and maketh it to wreathe
The mountains huge with momentary flame; anon
Imprisoned doubt would vanish, and sweet thoughts, estranged
Before, would glow with earnestness, and I was changed
To feel—thou art a portion of His will.

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THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

WHILE fancy stems the immeasurable deep,
And counts each meteor darting from its cave
Of lurid fire, strange are the thoughts that creep
In mind's gem-giving grave.

Even now, methinks, I hear a voice afar
That bids me welcome to another shore,
Where Carnage laps the blood that giant War
Pours out —what scenes of gore!

Two armies meet, and loud the clash of arms
Reverberates with wild distinctness now;
And sleeping thousands start from sleep's soft charms,
With pallid cheek and brow!

Two nations meet, not in the embrace of love,
But in the horrid hug of desperate strife,
And louder than the bolts of thundering Jove,
Death triumphs over life!

Death-hurling weapons ope their flaming jaws,
And hundreds melt before the iron shower;
Expiring heroes, in that awful pause
Ere death, cheer, struggle, lower!

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Yes—lower upon the faces of —— but, hark!
The fiery trumpet sounds the wild "Retreat!"
France staggers from—(O Heavens! that eye should
A foe she yet must meet. [mark!)—

On, conquerors of Jena, on! once more,
Ye warriors of Solferino, on!
How brave in battle was the France of yore,
Kings homage paid her throne!

See how the lightnings dart o'er trembling earth!
The breath of war—the cannon's fiery tongue!
Annihilation sweeps the wastes of Wörth,
And fame from France is wrung!

Look on the wreck, ambition—look again!
Dost thou deserve the scorpion whip of scorn?
Recall to life thy tens of thousands slain—
Give smiles to those forlorn!

Thou canst not; nay, nor wilt thou deign to hear
The ceaseless sobs of those that well may weep;
Death rests on his pale brow that was so dear,
But thou dost call it—Sleep!

Pale Christianity looks on in vain,
For Chaos fills the haunts she knew so well;
Yet will she smile, and wake her seraph-strain
To quiet war's loud hell!

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AWAY, AWAY!

Away, away! thy cold caress
Is like a nightmare on my soul!
Thy kiss pollution—faithfulness
Is written on the tides that roll.

Away! if not a Judas, thou
Hast got a heart framed to deceive,
Whose coldness reaches to thy brow,
Yet I its pathos did believe!

Alas, my heart! requited ill
For all thy fondness—anxious woe
For one, whose heart, like frozen rill,
Conceals its rankling filth below!

But shall my exiled bosom bleed
Because thine arms encircle one,
Who fails thy subtle smile to read
And deems thy heart like yonder sun?

No! I shall bear whatever fate,
And still repudiate with scorn
A memory linked with endless hate,
A hate that burns the longer borne!

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But mark an injured woman's ire!
The heart that 's galled no mercy knows;
For her revenge is winged with fire,
And all her soul the death-dart throws!

THOUGH CARE HAS CRUSHED MY TIMID MUSE.

Though care has crushed my timid Muse,
And chilled the ashes of my glee,
I cannot, gentle girl, refuse
One who is all sincerity.

And must I wake my slumbering lyre,
Because thy voice is in mine ear?
And will it gratify desire
In one I cherish doubly dear?

Then, Mary, then to thee my lay
Does wing its flight on wings of love,
Whilst memories of a vanished day
Recall the brook, the flower, the grove;

For these remind me still of thee,
And all the joys that we have known;
Ah! hours so lovely cannot be
The gall that mars affection's tone.

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How bright the unextinguished flame
That early love fanned in my breast!
It brightens when I hear thy name,
And soothes my soul in hopeful rest.

No fancied dream of what hath been,
Makes memory wake, remembrance glow:
Reality's unsullied sheen
Is all, save thee, my heart can know.

ROLL ON, BRIGHT MOON, ROLL ON.

The bright moon rolls o'er the slumbering earth,
And silence binds the revels of mirth;
And the rose's redolence is fled,
And the lily droops its snowy head;
So I'll away to Diana's bower,
Her smile is sweeter than the flower
That Flora culls for her jetty hair,
She 's my life, my light, and my matchless fair.
Roll on, bright moon, roll on,
Thou silent moon roll on!

The seraphs are watching Diana's sleep,
And around her couch gay Cupids creep
To steal a glance of her lovely face,
And bask in the beams of her angel-grace;

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I must away to share in the bliss,
And gather the dew-drops from her kiss,
And list to the music of her sigh;
Love lurks in the azure of her eye.
Roll on, bright moon, roll on,
In beauty still roll on.

I'll lay my head on her spotless breast,
And feel that Elysium gleams in the west,
And when the blush glows on her cheek,
Then soul to soul will softly speak;
And the tender accents, as they fall,
Will be love's dulcet madrigal,
And thus, as our mystical souls will blend,
How blissful the hours their way will wend!
Then roll, bright moon, roll on,
Beautiful moon, roll on!

LINES ON A PICTURE.

In death she smiles—so young,
So beautiful and innocent—
Untimely from a being wrung
Whose soul with hers was blent!
She 's pale—how pale! but heavenly fair,
And all, save soul, is present there.

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Canst thou shed tears, O Death?
Ah! if thou canst, did they not roll
In pity, whilst her fragrant breath
Did cease to fan his soul?
Did not the angels whisper—"No!"
Ere thou hadst dealt the fatal blow?

His spirit seems an eye
That opes to gaze on her and weep,
That makes a shade reality,
And cannot, will not sleep,
But shines a mental sunbeam bright,
Nor fades with day, nor flies with night.

Her voice was love's, its tone
Was soft and dulcet as a gleam
Of hope unto his soul. 'Tis gone,
Like some impressive dream,
That leaves a lingering tint behind
To soothe the disappointed mind.

Then woke his mighty lyre
The deep-felt notes of plaintive song,
And flowed his soul with music's fire
Till sighed the listening throng;
All felt with sympathizing breast;
He felt more than can be exprest.

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SLEEP.

Sleep hath its own world;
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence.—*Byron.*

Sleep hath its worlds, mysteriously high
In the infinitude of plastic mind;
Worlds sparkling in the universal sky
Of wondrous dreamland—thoughts in light enshrined;
Bright Tempes rise, all paved with golden gleams
And flowers, whose fragrance spells the tip-toed breeze
That moveth like a spirit on the beams
Which guidè to heaven. O'er expansive seas,
All beautifully crystalline, arise
Sweet-wingèd odours to the genial skies.

Sleep hath its visions; whether there be heaven
Or hell depicted by the wizard-brush;
Gay, grave, or gloomy—true the picture given—
Omnipotent to please as 'tis to crush!
Perchance the soul drinks an electric sound
Wafted on seraph-wings to vanquish care;
Perchance a gloom cimmerian floats around
To poison slumber; and a sigh-stirred prayer
May then escape the lips; but from the heart,
A sigh for something not of earth a part.

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Sleep hath its people; whether those recalled
From silent sepulchres and trammels dull—
The narrow rooms by mute Obstruction walled—
Or those in active state—the beautiful:
Unstunned, we mingle with the friends that *were;*
The sad association is unknown!
The lips the worm had kissed are rosy *there,*
And warm with life. And oft, though long since flown,
Sweet souls revisit us, whose converse dear
Makes even the dream a real life appear!

Sleep hath its own realities. Asleep
All that 's material unthinking lies
Unconscious that a sleepless eye doth keep
Its ever-winged vigils. Spirit flies,
An undulating, disembodied light,
With kindred souls in fairer, purer skies,
Leaving bright foot-prints on the wings of night.
And sleep unfoldeth myst'ries strangely blent,
All problematic links that bind "To be"
With language-thinking, silent wonderment;
And which are but the waves rolled on the sea
That shoreless stretcheth out—Eternity!

IMPROMPTU.

I HAVE no heart to give away,
Because it is already gone;
Then bother not a breast of clay
As heartless as thine own.

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BEWARE!

A SOUL-SUBDUING thought,
Hurling back the pall of night,
Seeks that shrine where shineth not
The torch of hope, the lamp of light,
The beacon of existence
Replaced by demon care;
And sighing 'midst the gloom profound,
The soul doth hear its warning sound,
Long whispering ever louder in the distance—
"Beware!"

But, ever heedless, on,
Like a changeful ball of fire,
Flashing past till it be gone,
Rolls ever transient life. Desire
Is echoing each glad note
Of pleasures sparkling there;
Inhaling mirth's delicious breath
The perfume charms, though it be death;
But, hark! that thought awaketh still its sad note—
"Beware!"

And hours of anguish roll,
Full of warning as they pass;
But the dark, unseeing soul,
Like Wisp at night on the morass,

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Companionless and lonely,
Moves aimless through despair;
Still in the headlong, thoughtless flight,
The warning wakes with red affright,
And stops the lone immortal flame with only—
"Beware!"

Where must the reckless stop?
Where dark Hades rules in gloom!
It is there we cease to hope,
And slumber in the icy room
That knows nor sunny morning
Nor night of visions fair;
There all is silent as the sea
That swallows all—eternity!
'Tis sad to know—when gone there's no returning—
"Beware!"

GOSSIPS AND THE WAR.

THERE is loud expostulation 'mid this vision-winged creation,
Of a fiery generation, on this red, horrific war;
And the palpitating crowd makes the slowly-passing cloud,
Trembling, shed its tears of water, for so fierce the clang and clatter
'Gainst the elemental spirit-vapours jar.

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There 's a *Jones*, with eyes dilated, tells humanity is fated,
Whilst a *Brown*, most shallow-pated, waits the telegraphic car,
Then relates *bad* tidings *worse*, till exaggeration's curse,
Like an onward-floating bubble, swells and bursts with fury double
In the ear-abyss engulphing tales of war.

There are snips and snobs despotic, with rhetoric most Attic,
Making taverns ring chaotic with discussions on the war,
Till the startled ear of night shuts in darkness with affright,
And is buried in the slumbers of its visionary numbers,
While are spread the wings Plutonian afar.

And betimes is heard a ditty, most miraculously witty,
'Gainst that fashion-famous city—once so brilliant—fallen star.
'Tis a pity, too, old Nap, that there should be such a gap
In the fairy-tinselled skylight of your bright Imperial twilight!
But untimely foresight suffers—saith the war.

Truly warlike innovation sets a-quivering a nation,
Till funeral sensation points unto the phantom-car
Of the bright millennium, whilst the sad events to come
Are all mirrored, most unpleasant, in thy glass prophetic present,
All emphatically trumpeting the war.

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And *they* say that fiend Ambition, like a flame-girt apparition,
Stems each Tempe deemed Elysian velvet quietude to mar,
And gigantically sneers on a world bedewed with tears;
But let future gossips mutter, for the present fail to utter
The innumerable horrors of the war.

OH, WAKE THAT HARP AGAIN!

Oh, wake the harp that oft before
Dispelled and chased away
The shadows deepening o'er my soul,
And darkening its ray;
Why sleeps that harp when grief awake,
Floats on the tide unrest?
Oh, bid its sweet notes ring again
Within my hollow breast!
For wine hath ceased to banish gloom,
And beauty smiles in vain;
Is love too gone? hath life a balm?
Oh, wake that harp again!

As Music's god shone bright above,
And did approving mark
The dissolution of the gloom
That made my spirit dark,

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So will thy seraph-soul, my love,
With brighter radiance glow
When thy sweet voice and harp dispel
This bosom-thrilling woe!
Though chained in grim Affliction's night,
And suffering my chain,
Hope lives with thee—I struggle still.
Oh, wake that harp again!

What were my dark existence here
If 'twere not for thy love?
What were the countless charms of earth—
The wonders of above?
All these would pass like some brief dream,
And I forgotten be
Amid the ruins of that dream
If 'twere not, love, for thee!
Oh, breathe into my soul, my love,
The notes of some soft strain;
'Tis all I ask—save love and thee—
Then wake that harp again.

EPIGRAM.

We a' hae oor fauts, an' are prone
To indulge in voluptuous evils;
But judge weel, ye righteous! an' own
Wha the gods are, an' syne—wha the deevils?

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FAREWELL TO A FRIEND.

THOUGH not to me the unfading charms belong,
That grace impressive or undying song,
Indissoluble friendship prompts my strain,
And stirs the embers of a tuneless brain,
And wakes emotions, such as voiceless swell,
When parting friends exclaim at last—"Farewell!"

Thus now with me, such like emotions rise,
Although the liquid language of the eyes
May fail to flow. It is not strange! before,
On Mother Scotia's warrior-giving shore,
I've seen a soldier's tears to 'flowing well
Within his eyes, at good-bye's stirring knell.

But why regret a friend's departure? Why
Should tears be welling in a troubled eye?
Because 'tis human nature: is it not?
There is a tide in every heart, I wot,
That flows into the eye beneath the spell,
The touching music of the word—Farewell.

Oh, friend, esteemed, respected, ere we part,
Accept this tribute of a friendly heart,
Sung by a Muse—a poor and wayward elf—
(Sincerity's a treasure in itself)—
Whose sighs are heard, whether in house or dell,
When breathing plaintively a soft Farewell.

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Ah, if the magic, mystic power were mine
To paint immortally on merit's shrine
A name so worthy and so little known,
That name were thine, my friend, and thine alone,
That it might wake some future Poet's shell
As it wakes mine—thus chiming a Farewell.

And we will miss thee from our *tuneful ring*,
As hours and days their weary flights may wing ;
But Hermit Memory does often trace
On sheeted nothingness an old friend's face ;
And does full oft, too, pent in wondrous cell,
Recall the moments echoing—" Farewell !"

The eye that stems immeasurable love
In holier regions—said to be above—
Dwells on the beauty of a soul like thine !
And *we* will bless thee, friend, for auld langsyne,
When gone are years that may strange stories tell,
Ere we at last must bid a long Farewell !

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STANZAS,

WRITTEN BY DESIRE.

Lovers listen, for my heart is
  Pouring forth its earnest lays
To a form, fair as Astarte's,
  Claiming more than mortal praise.

'Tis my Mary that inspires me
  With divine emotions long—
Love's intensity that fires me
  With these notes of hallowed song.

Ah, my Mary, ever nearer
  Are our kindred spirits knit;
Ever brighter, ever dearer,
  Are our souls with love-gleams lit.

When I sleep, a thought is ever
  Bringing thee to soothe my rest;
When awake, thine image never
  Fails to cheer my hopeful breast.

Thou hast got my heart, my Mary,
  Give me in return but thine,
Then, should earth—existence vary,
  Bliss unchangeable is mine.

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IN MEMORIAM.

O, MEMORY! why thus unfold
The sacred relics of thine urn?
Why spirits of the days of old,
Do you again return?

The songs she sang are not unknown,
Nor does her harp forgotten lie,
Its spirit-notes, though hushed, though flown,
Live still in memory.

Is there no mourner—none to shed
On her lone grave a tear?—no eye
To ope its flood-gates?—for this dead,
Fair-faded flower no sigh?

'Tis well! since I may mourn alone,
And pour heart's tears o'er her grave
At twilight grey—when day is gone—
When night rests on the wave.

Well I remember; it was night—
A lovely night; the mountain's brow
Wrinkled, wore wreathes of languid light;
It seems a vision now!

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Like angel-hymns the streamlets flowed;
Perchance a gentle zephyr played
Round sleeping blossoms; Heaven glowed
A fire-stemmed, vast arcade!

That night she died—that night my heart
Ceased to be what it was; its tone
Became estranged, as if a part
Of it was dead—was gone!

Early misfortunes are such seeds
As root in youthful breasts, and sprout
Into despair—the victim bleeds
Till life's dim lamp be out!

ANNIE.

My Annie sleeps,
And angels hover, watchful over
Her couch, where Love keeps
His vigils ever, absent never,
Breathing sighs upon her pillow;
Dreams visit—strange dreams!—
Her spirit nightly, tingeing lightly
Sleep, with golden gleams;
And now she seemeth, as she dreameth,
Moonbeam resting on a billow.

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Will Annie wake?
A soft voice calling, like leaves falling,
In an autumn brake,
Or flowerets graves on, rippling waves on
Some calm, flowing, distant river,
Tells me she no more
Will smiling greet me, welcome, meet me,
On earth's desert shore;
'Tis ever knelling, telling, telling,
Annie slept—to sleep for ever!

THE POISONED CUP.

A FRAGMENT.

Pass the cup with red wine flowing,
Lest despair should gall my song,
Lest care's bitterness should dart,
Like an arrow through my heart;
Pass it quickly, ever going,
Moment's mirth would fain prolong,
Chime like bells their warning knells
Telling I too, must depart!

Passed it was, and warmly, keenly,
Eagerly the draught was drained,
A moment—eyes with madness filled!
Breasts amazement, horror thrilled!

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Whispers, "Who hath done it?" Queenly
Woman breathed, and reason waned!
Arise and say, thou trammelled clay,
Was it beauty's hand that killed?

TO A STAR.

THERE is a lonely star that shines in heaven,
The changeful star that rules my destiny;
Too often 'tis by adverse breezes driven
Through boundless, gemmed infinity.
Now o'er its halo sable curtains are,
And now its beamy presence glads my soul;
Ah, wherefore thus, thou melancholy star,
Dost fitful, changeful roll?

Dimly from thy mysterious abode
Thou lookest through a veil of tears on me;
Sadly, amidst the golden throng of God,
Thou wanderest in eternity!
Ah! do thy sister stars upon thee frown?
And doth their harmony perplex thy light?
Then 'tis not strange thou mournfully look'st down,
Lone wanderer of the night.

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Each glance of thine is to my thirsting soul
A trilling note from Melody's sweet well;
Each ray, though "few and far between," a whole
Of spirit-rounds, a balmy spell!
Spread are thy aërial wings of feathery fire—
Bliss revels on the shrine of banished woe;
Night's shadows shroud thy wings above—my lyre
And soul are sad below!

Dweller in the cerulean above,
Oh, let thy visionary beams descend
With purer radiance, mellowed into love,
On me, or bid my life-dream end!
Why, like a seraph weeping, march along
The placid azure of the beamy skies?
Awake in light as doth my soul in song
Watching thy rayey eyes!

LOVE'S BOUQUET.

The bulbul loves the rose, 'tis said,
When stars are peeping,
And pours a well of melody
To melt its slumbers;
Ah! may not I my sad notes shed
Around thee sleeping?
My lute and soul to only thee
Can wake their numbers.

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There is a spirit in thy dream,
A light from heaven,
That waketh o'er thee in a smile
Of purest pleasure.
Oh, that thy smile's pellucid gleam
To me were given;
How we would mingle them the while,
Thou angel treasure!

There is a part within my heart
Where love sits sighing,
There is a thought within my soul
That sleeps, O never!
Dissolve thy spirit o'er that part,
'Twere bliss undying!
And make that thought thy bright name's scroll,
'Twill live for ever!

STANZAS.

GREAT Spirit of the Universe, awake!
Mighty plastic Nature speak from thy wintry tomb,
Is there a symbol couched in thy spacious womb
Whence man may symbolize, or shape as 'twere,
Pictorial similes of all we dare?
Answer—my soul, all eagerness, would lessons take.

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Minerva shines, and folly fades behind
The intolerable dazzle as night before
The golden toe of morn; and Truth's intrinsic lore
Affords a canopy to vagrant thought,
And harbours in its bosom, beauty-fraught,
The wondrous offspring of a philosophic mind.

Is there on earth wherewith the soul of man
Can, with triumphal *gloire*, obliterate each blot
That blackens it in a vile frame pre-doomed to rot?
Yes—there is one thing, hight the Book of books;
In which believe, nor heed the sneerer's looks,
Remember life is measured by a single span.

What mean yon pompous, arrogant display,
Yon glossy show, yon useless, dreamy pageantry—
Bright morning bubbles all that shine, ere night to be
Swept and dissolved to utter nothingness?
Thine answer, man! the question has no less
An import than the answer—what then, why are they?

Is it because mad Fashion must refine,
By scattering her baubles in our flowery world,
That needy, helpless thousands are forgotten hurled
Into the squalid den of penury?
Speak, millionaire! I do not envy thee,
Nor crave a paradise for such a soul as thine!

Answer, thou minion, kissed by smooth-lipped Pelf,
Has yonder poor itinerant wretch a heart, a soul?
Then wherefore sneer, thou bauble-pinioned doll?

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Perchance that at the footstool of his Lord
He lays such coins as may at last afford
His soul a blissful, heavenly home—what of thyself?

Man, like a bubble, or a snowy flake,
Shines for a moment in a cold inconstant ray,
Then bursts, or melts, or is for ever borne away!
Unurn philosophies of other years,
And learn that angels shed unnumbered tears
On each quick span of our existence here; then wake

Thy soul, if it be wrapped in sleep of Hate,
Wrapped in terrific dreams of inhumanity
And selfishness. Oh! why thy fellow's tyrant be?
A philanthropic soul is like the sun,
It warms and cheers all, all it shines upon;
Not so the tyrant soul that whets the sting of Fate.

SPIRITS OF THE OCEAN.

I've been tossed upon thy bosom, mighty Ocean,
And have listened to the music of thy wave
When the tempest's voice was roaring,
When the lightning-cloud was pouring [tion
Down ceaseless floods; when a thunder-fraught commo-
Murmured darkly o'er the seaman's living grave;
Then would wondrous Fancy form,
'Mid the rushing of the storm,
Lovely spirits, guardian spirits of the brave.

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I have seen them treading lightly on the billow,
And my soul would sigh to be free as themselves,
And would mingle with them nightly,
Or when Luna, veilless, brightly,
Threw her golden locks on Ocean's pebbled pillow,
Or when big waves rose like phosphorescent shelves,
They would walk together o'er
The blue waters to the shore,
There to mingle with Elysian, sister elves.

They are beautiful as Hebes 'mong young roses;
Ever gracefully their virgin feet are pressed
On the waves' unyielding bosoms;
'Tis like shedding lily-blossoms
On the breast of some huge crystalline Colossus!
And they hold a mystic commune with the blest,
For their mission is to bear
Warning through the trackless air
When dire dangers stride o'er Ocean's heaving breast.

And they rescue gentle spirits from the waters,
When the swallowed wreck is madly revelled o'er,
And they climb the starbeams slowly
To the far land of the holy,
Where a hand divine ethereal glory scatters.
What felicity unfolds its balmy store
To these spirits of the deep!
Ah! not subject they to Sleep;
They are gleams of living light from heaven's shore!

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And invisible they loll amid the glory
Of the sunlight during day till loometh night
With her host of shadows dreamy,
Then their beautifully beamy
Faces chase away each phantom grim and hoary.
Oh, I love thee, Ocean, with those souls of light!
What are man and wrecks to thee,
Ever rolling, mighty sea?
Thou clapp'st thy hands in the vastness of thy might!

HYMN TO THE SPIRIT OF LOVE.

Oh spirit of my waking hours,
Sweet vanquisher of cruel thought;
Thou, like bright summer's early flowers,
Art with divinest freshness fraught;
Thou art no vision; thou art fair,
High-floating, meteor-like in air,
A fiery pillar 'tween me and despair.

I see thee with sleep's mystic eye,
For thou art present in my dreams;
When Slumber's bosom heaves a sigh,
'Tis borne along on thy soft gleams.
Ah, what art thou—so like a star,
So high, so beautiful, so far,
Yet shedding bliss from thy fire-feathered car?

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And ever from thy starry wings
Thou shedd'st a warm, life-sweetening dew,
As skylark early dewdrops flings,
Ere fades he in heaven's placid blue.
Entranced I've listened, wand'ring long,
To each soft cadence of thy song—
To notes which charmed the chords they fell among!

And I have known thy heavenly glow,
And know, too, beauty, truth, and thee,
And bliss—all felt and known below—
Dwell not on earth immortally;
And knowing this, vain thoughts would fling
Themselves upon the wind's swift wing,
For adoration taught my soul to sing.

And I have sung, I know not now
How oft, inspired by thee; my soul
Hath been thy dwelling-place; my brow
Bore long thine impress—'twas thy scroll;
But there thy writings wear a pall,
'Tis now an error-mantled wall,
Concealing more—more than I dare recall!

And I have knelt before thy shrine,
And, kneeling now as heretofore,
Feel that thy presence is divine—
Know thou'rt omniscient as of yore,
To quell the tumult of the breast,
To soothe th' unhappy, bless the unblest—
To snatch the suff'rer from his vague unrest.

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The withered leaflet falls to earth,
  But who, a worshipper of thee,
Would say—"Pshaw, let it rot, its worth,
  Or worthlessness speaks not to me!"
Its day of beauty hath gone by,
And now it doth most truly lie
A teaching truth—unurned philosophy!

When night's still lagging shadows die,
  Who hath not loved to wander forth
To look on ocean, earth, or sky,
  And mountains rising from the earth
To welcome forth the sun, and not
Exclaim, with soul in every thought,
The earth and sea and sky with thee are fraught.

Thou art immortal as the light
  That wells around the throne of Jove!
Thou art melodious, spotless, bright
  As day eternal!—thou art Love!
Oh keep me still, where'er thou art,
From earth's impurities apart,
For I have worshipped thee with more than heart.

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THOUGHTS AT THE SEASIDE.

Ever by the sounding sea,
  Spirit-thoughts of wondrous birth
Rise and set in mystery,
  Like the souls that visit earth;
One appears an infant fair,
One is gone we know not where!

Now the starward glance of mind
  Dwells on strange creations there—
Travels on the unseen wind—
  Clasps the meteor-fires of air;
Wreathes the golden chains of light
Which adorn the cloudless night.

And the spirit, spotless beam,
  Spreads her dove-wings o'er the main,
Solves the problem—Doubt's dark dream,
  And, admiring, looks again
On the tranquil, boundless, sea
Mirror of immortality.

Oh! I love the ocean, long
  I would hear its mystic lay,
Meditate its wild wave's song
  When the harbinger of day
Climbs the azure of the sky,
Like a wonder-seeking eye!

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Or when gloaming grandly looms,
Ushering in the starry throng,
Glowing all in flamy tombs
That to sun-eyed Jove belong;
Then, oh then! 'twere sweet to be
Musing by the sounding sea.

THE LOST JEWEL.

A LADY fair
Was bending mutely o'er her child; 'twas lying
Upon a little bed;
It was so still that you would think it dying;
But her despair
Too truly told 'twas dead!
And ever and anon her eyes would seek
The door, as if her fancy pictured there
The one she loved, and would essay to speak.

Pale was her face,
But finely formed; her dark eye-lashes heavy
Were hung with beads of tears;
Her hair dishevelled—dark as death, and wavy;
These bore a trace
Of anguish such as nears,
Or borders on distraction. Calmly now,
Like statue of rare beauty and much grace,
She stood with hand laid on her burning brow.

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The feeble light
A flickering, strangely-fashioned lamp was throwing
Around the room, bespoke
It was neglected, yet was odd shadows showing—
Offspring of night,
Around, above. The clock,
A solemn dreamer, muttering a rhyme
Of reckless rhythm, baffled silence quite;
And thus blent 'plaining voice and changeless chime:—

"'Tis lost—'tis gone!
My ever-loving Conrad's priceless jewel,
Alas, is stol'n away!
Oh, who hath been so heartless and so cruel
As take alone
My heart's deep-cherished ray,
That lighted up my bosom's lonely core,
And made my life like some sweet flower new blown,
All fresh and beautiful—'tis this no more!

"Ah! will he dream
That his invaluable jewel ceases
To light with smiles his house?
And that the casket that was wont to please us
With Naiad gleam
And ruby lustre, now 's
All that remains—a worthless, useless show;
An empty ornament, whose carvings seem
A mockery? Will thus he dream? Ah, no!

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"What will he say
When he will learn from my sad lips the story—
The story of much pain?
How will my soldier hear it? Oft, before he
Had gone away,
He o'er and o'er again
Bade me, like miser guard his jewel rare;
Nor should I cease to love it night or day;
And I have guarded—loved it—'tis not *there!*

"The casket was
Locked in my fondest clasp. Did I not guard it?
It was, like Conrad's, mine;
How have my ceaseless vigils been rewarded?
Thus, thus, alas!
Oh, Conrad! heart like thine
Can never disbelieve me—doubt, or be
Turned coldly, coldly 'gainst me; ever 'twas
So firmly, fondly mine. But where is he?

"He is not here!
None breathes consolatory words; deep sorrow
Is my inheritance
To-night; and ever each succeeding morrow,
More dark and drear,
Will from the future glance
On me, as doth the sun-gleam on the tomb
That knows not of its presence! Life is dear,
But not to me; why should I worship gloom?

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" He fights for France.
Perchance on gory field he now is bleeding,
And muttering my name,
While from him life and light are fast receding
Sad severance
That fills the scroll of Fame,
And fills the breast with sleepless fears—the eye
And home with gloom—the beamy countenance
With all betokening anxiety !

" I look on thee,
Sweet babe ! thou'rt still so beautiful and truly
Like morning blossom blown,
That hath been by some ruthless hand but newly
Plucked from its tree,
And left to die alone !
Oh cruel, cruel Fate ! thou'st taken that
Which thou canst ne'er restore again to me,
And for *our* priceless gem thou'st left us—what ?

" I look on thee
And sigh, for there, alas ! is no recalling
Of speech to those sealed lips,
Which something undefinable is palling.
What can it be ?
Death—meagre fiend, who trips
Alike the rich, poor, strong, and feeble, o'er
That precipice the living cannot see,
But know that such exists, and know—what more ?

Digitized by Google

"Arise, bright Hope!
Thou sun that cheers humanity, existence;
I'll bid my Conrad kneel
Before thy hallowed shrine; then, in the distance,
See gardens ope,
Which endless day reveal,
And fruits and flowers, and streams of tuneful sound;
Then tell him thus:—Though we in darkness grope,
In such a place our jewel will be found."

SECOND EPISTLE TO A. L.

I SEAT mysel' beside the ingle,
Whaur coloured lowes thegither mingle,
An' just begin to rhyme, an' jingle
Thochts wantin' wit;
For my puir Muse bides i' the dingle
O' darkness yet.

Nae matter; she at least, puir hizzie,
No wi' owre meikle schullin' dizzie,
When friendship prompts, is seldom lazy
To wauk the lyre,
Tho' simple as the sang o' pussie
Beside the fire.

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But first, my frien', o' frien's the wale,
I'se coax her wi' a waught o' ale;
Wi' this a sermon, sang, or tale,
Mair fire displays,
An' aiblins when ye try't yersel,
We'se hear the praise.

Jock Barleycorn, they say, at best,
Is but a fause, deceitfu' guest,
Aye mak's a mockery, a jest
O' haly things;
But yet, my Muse has aft confessed
He gied her wings.

Sae let them just misca' him bluntly
In "Gude Words," "Chaumers," "Blackwood,"
"Bentley,"
An' aiblins ither bukes, thocht saintly,
Deservin' fame,
We'se eulogize, however faintly,
His gude auld name.

But this epistle, sang, or letter
Is na just meant, by yer auld debtor,
To mak' gay Bacchus ony better
Than what he 's named;
Assuredly for sic a matter
I'se na be blamed.

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To spier hoo Fortune flings her ba',
Whether she visits ye ava
Wi' her attendants, great an' sma',
Her granes an' grunts;
Or gif ye gi'e folk heads to claw
Wi' witty dunts;

Or gif ye still mysteriously
Fish wondrous morals in that sea
We sail o'er to Eternity—
Folks ca' it Life;
Or, wi' a "wee drap in yer e'e,"
Ye seek a wife;

Or gif Apollo-like ye sit,
Firm frien' o' Poets, love, an' wit,
Flingin' bricht arrows, sure to hit
Some crazy pow
That tosses in a crabbit fit,
Or spleenic lowe;

Gin in yer biggin', snug and cozy,
You sigh for twa cheeks, red or rosy,
That haunt ye, when ye're light or dozy,
Baith day and night aye,
Lord bless them a', though my warst foes aye,
They're my delight aye;

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Or whether in a sang or poem
Ye hint the gods ye meikle owe 'em,
Though wee, an' placed sae far below 'em,
They lo'e ye weel;
Nae won'er! ye sae meikle show 'em
When up ye speel;

Or in poetic loom ye're weavin'
Some heartfelt strain, or gif ye're grievin'
'Mang ills, mischances--bosom heavin'
On Poortith's brink;
These gar me write—for this I'm scrievin'
My thoughts in ink.

Arise! ye ghaists o' happy times;
Sweet auld langsyne in ither climes,
When we thought meikle o' sad rhymes
We laugh at noo;
Still they were but the first faint chimes
O' youth's curfew.

Oor philosophical harangues,
Oor Latin, French, an' ither tongues,
Oor artless rants, oor merry sangs,
An' stories meet,
Fond Memory will grasp as lang 's
She hauds her seat.

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When sleekit sleep had sent her hun'ers
Unto the lan' o' dreams an' won'ers,
We, snugly 'mang the saunts an' sinners
O' Poesy,
Indulged young Fancy's upward dan'ers,
Nor closed an e'e.

An' minstrel ghaists, wi' harp an' lyre,
That sprang frae heated Fancy's fire,
Stood roun' us baith, a bearded choir,
In bright review;
Till Truth, grim-visaged, pale wi' ire,
Might cry—"Ye're fou!"

Exhumin' Byron, Shelley, Burns,
We emulated them by turns,
Syne blessed their dust an' sacred urns
Wi' an "Amen!"
The best an honest bardie learns
Is frae sic men.

Wi' bright resolves, weel nail't wi' yill,
We'd speel Parnassus' cloud-capped hill,
An' warble 'mang the guid an' ill,
That might be on it,
Frae weans to hoary heads o' skill,
Like gowk or linnet.

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At least we fancied we could sing,
An' touch the heart's maist subtle string—
Imagined Fancy's wandering
Had reached Parnassus;
Gin we were wrang, 'tis a common thing
'Mang ither asses.

But set yer wit wi' mine, my frien',
We'se change the aspect o' ilk scene,
We'se scatter flowers on braes o' green,
Owre Scotland wide,
Till ilka carle an' youth an' wean
S'all loup wi' pride!

My sang is owre, my worthy L.,
An' lang may ye be hearty, hale,
To sing, as sweet 's a nightingale,
Yer glowin' numbers;
An' when ye down maun lay yer shell,
Gude bless your slumbers!

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ALLAHNOHR.

In the far East (for I was there) I strolled
  At leisure, some few hundred yards from camp,
Reflecting much on what I was of old,
  When I thought more of great Alladin's lamp
Than all the revelations science made;
  I thought, too, on some kicks I got, and how
I grinned at all old silly gossips said;
  I'm not quite so unpoetical now;
My thoughts are changed, you know; this is not strange,
For boys, weather, and women, always change.

Well, as I sauntered, suddenly I came
  Upon a motley crowd, of varied hue
And country; many there wore skins the same,
  Some white, black, brown—I saw none that were blue,
All formed a shapeless circle, so to tell,
  And in their midst there stood the time-worn form
Of that which once was man; but Time, that fell
  Destroyer, left but little for the worm
On his large, sinewy bones; and from his face
Hung long white hair—beard yielding it much grace.

The crowd was hard at jargon, and much stuff,
  When, instantaneously, the hum was hushed;
You'd fancy that Sir Quiet breathed—"Enough!"
  And pinned their tongues down in their mouths; I
    rushed

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To get a closer view, if possible,
And hear and understand—(the last was null)—
I heard and was astonished, for a well
Of music exquisitely beautiful
Poured in a stream unseen from his old throat,
And something, like a lyre, that I knew not.

Memory, *retentive*, I think they call it,
Is really a most important thing
When you've no pencil in your pouch or wallet
To write such thoughts as noteful moments bring.
My Muse is blest with such a memory,
At least it seems so, since she offers you
A specimen of Eastern minstrelsy,
Done in the verse the Minstrel sang it, too;
Tis not quite the original—not quite,
Because my Muse is in the sulks to-night:—

Darkly, darkly come, O Night!
With thy clouds of gloom;
Let thy darkness be my light,
Thy shadow my tomb!
Since each day no longer brings
Solace or delight,
Alone to thee my spirit clings,
Quickly come, O Night!
Can I mingle now with mirth?
No—oh, never more!
She is gone away from earth,
Fair Allahnohr.

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And I saw her pass each star,
Upward, upward, high,
In a heaven-ascending car,
Through the placid sky;
And an angel-host, all bright,
With cloud-covered limbs,
Bore her mid the stars of night,
Humming happy hymns,
To a land all love, 'tis said,
An unsuffering shore;
There she lives—to me she's dead!
Lost Allahnohr.

When I lay me down to sleep
On my cold, dark bed,
Tears awake—thoughts wake to weep
Tears that are unshed!
And her spirit's in my dream,
If perchance I sleep,
Walking, a peace-giving gleam,
Through my slumbers deep;
But reality speaks sad
When the night is o'er;
Morning brings what used to glad
Lost Allahnohr.

Memory alone recalls
Vanished, blissful hours;
But the cold earth ever palls
The fairest of its flowers.

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And her voice was rich and clear—
How it soothed my heart!
And it still rings in my ear,
Never to depart.
When she sung this sad song sweet,
Often heard before,
How my heart would wildly beat
Time, Allahnohr.

Heard ye the maniac maiden at even,
Deep in the beautiful vale of Cashmere,
Mournfully singing to Allah in heaven
Hymns for the soul that on earth was so dear?
Sweetly the song-birds, in rich emulation,
Perched on the blossoming boughs of each tree,
Joined in a chorus of sweet lamentation,
Hailing Amenda with sorrowful glee.

Softly she spoke, as if angels were there, and
Her eyes on heaven were fixedly set;
What sought they there? Ah! a sad, solemn errand,
Only the darling she could not forget!
Sadder her heart grew, and sweeter than ever
Rung dulcet echoes o'er night-mantled lea;
Mellow-voiced bulbuls, with pity's endeavour,
Soothed young Amenda with sorrowful glee!

Brightly and cheerful the sun came with morning,
Spreading his gauze-robes of warmth o'er her bed,
Which fairest flowers, full and fresh, were adorning,
Where the fair sleeper slept sound—she was dead!

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And gathered round her her tuneful companions
Singing her requiem on bush and on tree;
Then, with the green leaves of wide-spreading banyans,
Covered Amenda with sorrowful glee!

Oft my Allahnohr had sung
This sweet song to me,
Till my inmost core was wrung
With rich melody!
Sadness sweet doth ever wring
Tears from feeling heart,
From its deepest, hidden spring,
From its darker part;
And they roll unto the eye,
Like waves to the shore;
But I vainly weep and sigh
For Allahnohr!

What were all the joys that heaven
Sheddeth from above,
Since the scythe of Death hath riven
Life's sweet'ning flower—Love?
What were night of mirth and joy,
Dance and song and wine,
If no morn will greet mine eye,
Nor it's light be mine?
Mine's a heart asunder torn;
Will be ever more
Pent in night without a morn,
Lost Allahnohr!

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Were I in a lonely cave,
In the desert far,
It would be my palace—grave
When be quenched yon star;
Yonder star of sickly hue
Swimming blindly on
Through the depth of heaven's blue,
Sorrowful, alone!
In that lonely cave would I
Fated life deplore,
Till my woe-sick soul would fly
To Allahnohr!

She is with the angels bright,
Happy, happy now;
Rays of Heaven's immortal light
Encircle her brow.
We may yet enjoy that love
Which was here denied;
Haste, my spirit, haste above
To thy spirit bride!
Happiness dwells in that home,
Here 'tis found no more;
Take me to thy arms—I come
Soon, Allahnohr!

Such was the strain the wandering Minstrel woke,
With solemn pathos in the twilight grey;
His trembling voice and tear-filled eyes bespoke
The mingled grief and sweetness of his lay.

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And deep emotions thrilled that motley crowd,
It melted 'neath the magic of his strain
As doth at eve the heavy-moving cloud,
Which melts not into tears, but showers of rain,
And so, that night encamped before Lahore,
I dreamt much nonsense, and of Allahnohr.

NOTE.—Towards the close of 1864, there was a Durbar, or congress of British representatives, Indian chiefs and rajahs, held at Lahore; on which occasion a guard of honour of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders marched from Sealkote to that city, and was, on its arrival, encamped in the old Shalimar gardens. That part of expansive Hindostan being new to me, I not unfrequently devoted quiet evenings to rambling about, with a book in my hand or a comrade at my side, wherever the rein of curiosity led me, or the spur of the moment accelerated my fidgety fancies.

It was during one of those rambles I met with the incident already known; it made so deep an impression on my memory that, some time afterwards, it oozed out in the above miserable effusion. Although the Minstrel, for such the individual in question seemed to be, made a somewhat ridiculously laughable phenomenon to eyes that quizzed, yet the unaffected ease and considerable sweetness which characterised his united vocal and instrumental performances, amply told of his once possessing brighter, more polished, but now almost ebbed, abilities.—M'I.

TO B. M.

REMEMBER me, dearest, let memory ever
Retain the sad image of one wholly thine;
The mind it is changeful, and changes, but never
Forgetful when Love ushers whispers divine.
It may be new loves will rise
Matchless in woman's eyes
Whose virtues are deemed like the rays of the sun;

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But oh! while you this may own,
Think the poor heart that 's gone
Sighed with the many but loved only one.

If wealth, it should tempt you, and Love be forgotten,
Recall not the sweet time your heart was his shrine,
Bid him seek another breast—I ne'er be thought on,
The grief, should there be such, alone will be mine.
But oh! if within you find
Gleams of a constant mind,
Averting deceit and all honour would shun,
Then, then you will think still on
Some faithful heart that's gone
A heart that knew many, but loved only one.

CLARINDA.

A SERENADE.

Gentle Clarinda, oh, list to my lay,
Sweet is the music, though pensive my heart;
Sunniest pleasures are passing away,
Whilst thou, my fair one, in soft slumbers art.

Wake, fair Clarinda, the lily gives dew
To far straying sunbeams and opes with a smile;
The blossomy hawthorn is redolent too,
Thy bosom-afflictions the bliss will exile.

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Come to the valley where beauty awakes
When fanned with the fresh breath of beautiful morn,
We'll sport there together, as the sweet lark forsakes
Her haunt 'mong the daisies which newly are born.

Blithely we'll chant a soft duet to Love,
And emulate sweetly the bird of the skies;
Or bask in the sunbeams that stray in the grove,
And teach happy thoughts to each moment that flies.

Sweet are the moments when two souls in one
Are blending unconscious in Love's paradise;
Sweet are the gleams of a calm-setting sun,
When Earth seems to whisper—adieu—to fair skies.

Sweet is the music that wakes on the deep
When Cynthia smiles in her temple of light,
And sweet is the smile of a virgin in sleep,
For it has its birth in the dream-land of Night!

But oh! thou art sweeter and dearer than all,
For thou art my life, and my angel, my own;
A star in my heaven of hope! Must it fall?
Ah, then shall the voice of my lyre be unknown!

The notes of the Minstrel unheard died away,
Like snowflakes at eve in a river's calm breast;
His golden dream ceased with the notes of his lay,
Which Echo bore far to the region of rest.

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STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY THE PRESENTATION OF NEW COLOURS, BY HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND, TO THE 93D SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS, AUGUST 4, 1871.

Ye Sutherland Highlanders, heard you the story?
The dear tattered emblems of red auld langsyne,
That triumphantly waved on the red field of glory
Above you, like meteor-flags cheering your line;
Cheering you on, while dark myriads retreating,
With envy looked back on your crushing array;
Cheering you on—but 'tis needless repeating,
We part with those mind-stirring emblems to-day.

Ah, look! they are now waving quietly o'er you,
As if conscious of parting they bid you farewell;
And look at them well for perhaps never more you
Will see them, or greet them with ardour's deep "hail."
What memories glow in the moments of parting!
What scenes they reclaim from the depth of the past!
Perchance in some veteran eye there is starting
A tear where the soul of his sorrow is glassed!

But cheer ye, you warriors, the heart in its twilight,
Worn, wounded, must borne be to ultimate rest;
So with those old banners that waved in the skylight
Of glory, Peace clasps them at last to her breast.

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But here are new banners, unsullied and peerless,
Emblazoned with honours most gallantly won;
To you they are given—defend them, you fearless,
When war-clouds float o'er you and darken the sun.

When War strides around, a black, blood-curdling giant,
Painting pallor on faces that were ruby before,
Stand firm as a rock, stern, immovable, defiant,
Back-hurling destruction with those floating o'er.
And emulate nobly the brave hearts that battled
For honour and country, for glory and Queen; [rattled,
Whilst 'round them grim death-bringing messengers
Till the spirit of Victory breathed on the scene.

And dire Balaklava, ye numberless thousands,
The fire of the Gael—the stern mountaineer,
Hath felt and was shocked; ah, the memory now sends
A thrill through the breast, for a Gael hath no fear.
And Lucknow, the bloody, with trembling conviction,
Tamed rebels of blood that could laugh as they slew!
Attests still a prowess that scorns contradiction,
That burns in the brave heart, that's born in the true.

Remember those banners by fair hands were given,
Midst silence and solemness, pleasure, and prayer,
That you should defend them 'gainst all but yon Heaven;
'Twere bliss to defend for the sake of the fair.
And you will defend them 'gainst cohorts and dangers,
With ardour unflinching, with spirits like fire,
'Gainst the vain-grasping efforts of foes and of strangers;
Rememb'ring *one* face will fresh valour inspire.

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We know not the gloom, neither know we the glory,
That blackens, that burns, in futurity's store ;
The past, bright with triumph, will long tell the story,
How Highlanders gloriously conquered before.
And should those banners, on mountain, in valley,
Midst thunders of battle exultingly fly,
With sternness the Highlanders round them will rally,
Beneath them to triumph, or, guarding them, die !

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